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Supreme Court, U.S.
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No. _____ OFFICE OF THE CLERK

In The

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1997

MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA,
a municipal corporation,

Petitioner,

v.

MARILYN ALLEN, Personal Representative
of TERRY ALLEN, deceased,

Respondent.

On Petition For A Writ Of Certiorari To The United States Court Of Appeals For The Tenth Circuit

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTION PRESENTED

Can a municipality be held liable for "inadequately training" its police officers under Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 when it is not disputed that the city's officers were trained and the only argument is that the officers should have been trained "differently"?

LIST OF PARTIES

The parties to the proceeding on *Petition for Writ of Certiorari* are:

Petitioner:

Muskogee, Oklahoma, a municipal corporation

(Defendant in the District Court and Appellees in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit)

Respondent:

Marilyn Allen, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, deceased

(Plaintiffs in the District Court and Appellants in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit)

Additional parties in the lower courts:

Co-Defendants:

Rex Eskridge, Don Smith, Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer and James Crull.

RULE 29.6 STATEMENT

Pursuant to Rule 29.6 of the Rules of this Court, Petitioner states it does not have any parent companies or non-wholly owned subsidiaries.

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PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

Petitioner, the City of Muskogee, Oklahoma, respectfully petitions this Court for a Writ of Certiorari to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

OPINIONS BELOW

The unpublished District Court opinion granting summary judgment in favor of all Defendants is provided at Pet. App. 24-31. The opinion of the Court of Appeals reversing the District Court is provided at Pet. App. 1-23 and is reported at 119 F.3d 837 (10th Cir. 1997). The order denying rehearing by the Court of Appeals en banc was not accompanied by an opinion and is not published. (Pet. App. 32-33).

STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION

The United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit rendered its judgment and opinion on July 17, 1997. Petitioner timely filed a Petition for Rehearing en banc and Brief in Support on July 31, 1997. The Court of Appeals denied the Petition on September 12, 1997. (Pet. App. 32-33). This Court has jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1254(1).

STATUTORY AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS INVOLVED

United States Code, Title 42:

§ 1983. Civil Action for deprivation of rights.

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress. For the purposes of this section, any Act of Congress applicable exclusively to the District of Columbia shall be considered to be a statute of the District of Columbia.*

(R.S. § 1979; Pub. L. 961-170, § 1, Dec. 29, 1979, 93 Stat. 1284.)

*As written on the date of the incident which forms the basis for this lawsuit. (Pet. App. 34).

United States Code, Title 42:

§ 1983. Civil Action for deprivation of rights.

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the

> Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress, *except that in any action brought against a judicial officer for an act or omission taken in such officer's judicial capacity, injunctive relief shall not be granted unless a declaratory decree was violated or declaratory relief was unavailable*. For the purposes of this section, any Act of Congress applicable exclusively to the District of Columbia shall be considered to be a statute of the District of Columbia.*
>
> (As amended Pub. L. 104-317. Title III, § 309(c), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3853.)
>
> *As written on the date of filing this Writ of Certiorari with amendments italicized. The amendments are not relevant to this lawsuit. (Pet. App. 34-35).

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

In February 1994, Terry Allen fired upon and attempted to kill a Muskogee, Oklahoma police officer. In an undisputed act of self-defense the officer, and fellow officers, returned fire and Allen was mortally wounded. Allen's wife subsequently filed the present lawsuit alleging the City of Muskogee "inadequately trained" its officers to deal with armed and mentally disturbed persons in violation of Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983.

At the District Court level the City of Muskogee ("City") filed a Brief in Support of Summary Judgment. Contained in that brief was a section entitled "Undisputed Facts". Plaintiff did not contest the City's Undisputed Facts. Consequently the facts were deemed to be

true and for this Court's convenience are now provided, in relevant part, as an accurate history of the events leading up to this lawsuit.[1]

A. Factual History

1. On February 19, 1994, Terry Allen received an anonymous birthday card. The card was supposed to be from a previous lover.

2. Mrs. Allen [Terry Allen's wife] became very jealous and very angry and the two had a fight which resulted in Mr. Allen striking the Plaintiff and chasing her around the kitchen with a butcher knife, attempting to stab her.

3. On the next day, February 20, 1994, Mr. Allen slept until noon. The Plaintiff woke him up, and the minute he opened his eyes, he was wild-eyed and crazy.

4. Wagoner County Sheriff's Office reports include statements from the couple's two children, Heather and Jake Allen, which verify that Mr. Allen grabbed the Plaintiff's head, ran it into the wall, kicked her with his boot, battered the children, and threatened to kill the Plaintiff and the children.

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[1] Each of the following Undisputed Facts are contained in Defendant City of Muskogee's Brief in Support of Summary Judgment and Supplement to Brief in Support of Summary Judgment which were filed with the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma in case number CIV-95-3215.

5. The Wagoner County Sheriff's Office was called at 12:23 p.m. by a neighbor who reported the incident of domestic violence.

6. Wagoner County then called the Muskogee Police Department asking them to be on the lookout for Mr. Allen in a white Corsica, informing them of the tag number, an outstanding warrant for impersonating an officer, and that he was armed.

7. After Mr. Allen left his residence in Porter, Oklahoma, he called his house and told his wife that he was heading toward Stone Bluff to look for the man he believed was responsible for his brother's death in an automobile accident several years prior. Mr. Allen said he was going to kill this man and then himself.

8. Eventually, Mr. Allen arrived at the house of his sister, Rhonda Oakley, in Muskogee while the Wagoner County Sheriff's Department Officer Ron McCraig was at Mr. Allen's residence on the domestic abuse call.

9. The Wagoner County Sheriff's Office advised the Muskogee Police Department that Mr. Allen was at his sister's, Ms. Rhonda Oakley's house.

10. The Muskogee Police Dispatcher informed Lt. Don Smith of Mr. Allen's location and Lt. Smith proceeded to the location and called for backup. Officer Farmer, Officer Crull, and Officer McDonald responded and Lt. Smith informed them to meet at Mike's Grocery near the location to form a strategy.

11. While in Ms. Oakley's driveway, Mr. Allen told his sister, "I'm going to die today, either by the pills or a policeman's gun." Mr. Allen also told his sister he had

"killed three people on Highway 16"; this was later determined to be false.

12. Shortly thereafter, Ms. Oakley called 911, asking for an ambulance and reported that her brother had overdosed, was drinking, that he was having chest pains, and that he had guns with him. Dispatcher then informed Lt. Smith there was an attempted suicide at 4421 W. Broadway involving Terry Allen.

13. Lt. Smith drove up to the house, approached the white Corsica, and ordered the family members surrounding Mr. Allen's vehicle to step back. While approaching the vehicle, Lisa Perry told Lt. Smith that Mr. Allen was in the car and that he had a gun. Officer McDonald, Officer Farmer and Officer Crull arrived on the scene during these events.

14. At this time Officer McDonald also arrived on the passenger side of the car behind Lt. Smith. Lt. Smith saw Mr. Allen had a gun in his hand and he ordered Mr. Allen to drop it. Allen responded by stating, "Go ahead and kill me. I want to die." Lt. Smith and Officer McDonald reached into the car and tried to disarm Mr. Allen.

15. Mr. Allen pointed his gun at Officer Farmer, who was on the passenger side of the vehicle, and then swung the gun around, aiming and pointing it at Lt. Smith and Bentley McDonald. Shots were exchanged between Mr. Allen and Lt. Smith and Officer McDonald and Mr. Allen died from the gun shot wounds.

16. Lt. Smith and Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull were full-time officers with the

Muskogee Police Department. Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull had successfully completed the state sanctioned 314-hour Basic Training Academy of the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training ("CLEET") which includes training on the use of deadly force and dealing with upset, irrational, and mentally disturbed people.

17. Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull completed the *Muskogee Police Department's mini-academy* which lasts approximately four weeks and includes training on the use of deadly force and dealing with upset, irrational, and mentally disturbed people.

18. Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull successfully completed the *sixteen week Field Training Officer program* which includes training on the use of deadly force and dealing with upset, irrational, and mentally disturbed people.

19. Lt. Don Smith and Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull completed the *CLEET Firearms Training System (F.A.T.S.)* which involves deadly force decisions by use of electronically reproduced scenarios.

20. Since each officer's basic training academy, Lt. Don Smith and Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull have been instructed at least yearly on the use of deadly force during firearm requalification.

21. Since each officer's basic training academy, Lt. Don Smith and Officers Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull have completed additional CLEET sanctioned course work which includes training on the use of

deadly force and dealing with upset, irrational, and mentally disturbed people.

22. Each officer had a CLEET sanctioned class on dealing with the mentally and emotionally disturbed since 1992 including a November, 1993, class a mere three months before this incident.

23. The Muskogee Police Department trains its officers on a continuous basis at shift meetings. The topics often involve dealing with upset, irrational and mentally disturbed persons.

24. The Muskogee Police Department has a policy on the use of deadly force and dealing with the mentally ill. These policies are included in the Muskogee Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual which is given to each officer.

25. Plaintiff has no knowledge of Don Smith's, Bentley McDonald's, Brian Farmer's, or James Crull's training or supervision.

26. Chief Rex Eskridge was not personally involved in the acts occurring on February 22, 1994 and Plaintiff does not allege so.

27. Glen McEntire, *who is currently the Firearms Training Coordinator for CLEET* opined after reviewing training records of the individual defendant officers and their depositions and reports filed in this case, that the officers involved were adequately trained and their actions were in accord with training procedures taught by CLEET. Mr. McEntire additionally stated that, "Lt. Smith's training on this day [February 20, 1994] came to a forefront, and he handled himself in a very professional

and well-trained manner. He exemplified law enforcement training in the State of Oklahoma."

28. Plaintiff's expert, Dr. George Kirkham, gave a deposition in this case. Dr. Kirkham admits that if the Muskogee Police Department relied on the state-sanctioned CLEET training programs for training its officers, he could not criticize Muskogee for doing so. (Pet. App. 36-38).

29. Dr. Kirkham spent less than one and one-half hours reviewing the over 5,000 pages of training documents Defendant produced to Plaintiff before rendering his opinion.

30. Dr. Kirkham has no knowledge regarding the curriculum or training materials used in CLEET's basic academy or subsequent CLEET training materials. In fact, Dr. Kirkham was not even aware of the existence of CLEET.

31. Defendants Eskridge and Muskogee do not have a custom or policy of violating individuals' constitutional rights.

B. The District Court's Order

The individual officers who were involved in the shooting are being sued for excessive use of force. A summary judgment brief outlining the officers' defense was filed with the District Court. After analyzing this issue, the District Court found as a matter of law that the officers did not use excessive force. Consequently, the

Court ruled, without discussion, that the City was necessarily entitled to summary judgment on the "inadequate training" claim.

C. The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals' Order

The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ("the Tenth Circuit") did not believe the individual officers were entitled to summary judgment. In short, the Court believed there was a material factual dispute with regard to the excessive force claim. In so holding, the Court was required to address whether the City could be held liable for "inadequately training" its police officers based on the undisputed facts.

II. BASIS FOR JURISDICTION IN THE COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

Plaintiff filed a lawsuit against the Defendants pursuant to Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 alleging a violation of constitutional rights.

III. ARGUMENT IN SUPPORT OF ISSUING THE WRIT OF CERTIORARI

A. The Tenth Circuit's Holding is an Improper Statement of Law and Contrary to § 1983 Jurisprudence

The Tenth Circuit has ruled a City can be held liable for "inadequately training" its police officers under Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 *even if:* (1) the City complies with state statutory law and sends its officers to a state training academy where the officers are trained and certified, (2)

the officers receive additional and continuous training through the City and state mandated continuing education programs, and (3) there is no allegation that the City's officers previously violated any other person's constitutional rights.

This is not an opinion based on "erroneous factual findings" or a "misapplication of a properly stated rule of law".[2] This is a clear misinterpretation of this Court's holding in *City of Canton v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378 (1989) and raises serious questions of *federalism* which, if left unaddressed, will have wide-ranging effects on the ability of states to train and certify police officers in a manner that the *states*, and not Federal Courts, deem appropriate.

B. The Tenth Circuit's Misinterpretation of *Canton*

Plaintiff has alleged the City of Muskogee's officers were inadequately trained to deal with armed and mentally disturbed individuals. It is crucial to recognize that the Tenth Circuit did not question whether or not the officers received training in this area of law enforcement. The court recognized the fact that such training had been given. Rather, the Court examined *how* the officers were trained. The following portions of the Court's opinion illustrate this point:

> In Dr. Kirkham's opinion,[3] there were only two possibilities that could give rise to the present

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[2] Rule 10. Considerations Governing Review on Certiorari.

[3] Dr. George Kirkham is Plaintiff's expert witness who concluded the officers were improperly trained.

> incident – either the officers failed to follow their training **or they were improperly trained**. Lieutenant Brook, the Muskogee Police Department training coordinator from 1984 to 1993, testified the officers acted in accordance with their training in approaching the car and trying to take away the gun. Relying principally on this testimony, **Dr. Kirkham concluded the officers' training was inadequate**. Dr. Kirkham was also aware that Lieutenant Smith testified he acted in accordance with his police training. Moreover, the affidavit of Glen McIntyre (sic), the state firearms training coordinator, stated the officers followed their training. **The evidence supports an inference that the City trained its officers to leave cover and approach armed suicidal persons to try and disarm them.** (Pet. App. 12-13).

The Tenth Circuit supported its opinion by primarily relying on the well known holding of this Court in *Canton v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378 (1989).

Unlike the present case, *Canton* involved an allegation of *failing to provide training* and not an allegation of *improper training* such as that made here.[4] In holding that a failure to provide training may serve as § 1983 liability, the Court expressly stated liability will only attach in a narrow range of circumstances:

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[4] See also the concurring opinion of Justice O'Conner where it is provided: "Where, as here, a claim of municipal liability *is predicated upon a failure to act*, the requisite degree of fault . . . ". *Id.* at 394. (emphasis supplied).

> We hold today that the inadequacy of police training may serve as the basis for § 1983 liability *only* where the *failure to train* amounts to deliberate indifference to the rights of persons with whom the police come into contact. *Id.* at 388. (emphasis supplied).
>
> * * *
>
> Only where a *failure* to train its employees in a relevant respect evidences a "deliberate indifference" to the rights of its inhabitants can such shortcomings be properly thought of as a city "policy or custom" that is actionable under § 1983. *Id.* (emphasis supplied).
>
> * * *
>
> Only where a *failure* to train reflects a "deliberate" or "conscious" choice by a municipality – a "policy" as defined by our prior cases – can a city be liable for such a failure under § 1983. *Id.* (emphasis supplied).

Canton stands for the proposition that liability will attach only when a city *fails to provide* training to its officers. It does not hold that a city can be held liable when its officers are trained in the precise and subject matter of law enforcement area of law enforcement in question as the Tenth Circuit did in its opinion. The Tenth Circuit has created by its decision an entirely new basis of liability for municipalities which is without support in § 1983 jurisprudence.

C. The Meaning of "Different"

In providing further guidance as to when "failure to train" liability will attach, this Court stated:

> [I]t may happen that in light of the duties assigned to specific officers or employees the need for more **or different** training is so obvious, and the inadequacy so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that the policy makers of the city can reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need. In that event, the failure to provide proper training may fairly be said to represent a policy for which the city is responsible, and for which the city may be held liable if it actually causes injury. *Id.* at 390. (Pet. App. 11) (emphasis provided.)

In relying on the above language, the Tenth Circuit came to the following conclusion in the present case:

> When viewed in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, the record contains evidence that the officers **were trained to act recklessly** in a manner that created a high risk of death. The evidence is sufficient to support an inference that the need for **different** training was so obvious and the inadequacy so likely to result in violation of constitutional rights that the policy makers of the City could reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need. (Pet. App. 16) (emphasis supplied.)

This is an improper interpretation of the Court's holding in *Canton*. The logical interpretation is that "different" training means *training in an area that had not been addressed*. The Court's intent was clarified in its hypothetical immediately following this statement where it provided:

> For example, city policy makers know to a moral certainty that their police officers will be

> required to arrest fleeing felons. The city has armed its officers with firearms, in part to allow them to accomplish this task. Thus, *the need to train officers* in the constitutional limitations on the use of deadly force . . . can be said to be "so obvious," that failure to do so could properly be characterized as "deliberate indifference" to constitutional rights. *Id.* at 390. FN 10.

The Court made it clear that the intent was to hold cities liable when they *fail* to provide training in areas of law enforcement where the need for training is obvious. The Court's second example of when liability could attach further illustrates this point:

> It could also be that the police, in exercising their discretion, *so often violate constitutional rights that the need for further training must have been plainly obvious* to the city policy makers, who, nevertheless, are "deliberately indifferent" to the need. *Id.* (emphasis supplied).

Again, the Court cites an example where a city should recognize training is required but fails to act. Here, there was not any evidence presented to the District Court or the Tenth Circuit of any previous constitutional violations by Muskogee police officers. This was recognized by Judge Kelly in his dissent to the Tenth Circuit opinion. Consequently, the present case in no way parallels either of the two examples of "inadequate training" provided in *Canton*.[5] First, similar to a city's

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[5] See Justice O'Conner's concurring opinion where it is provided; "In my view, it could be shown that the need for training was obvious *in one of two ways*. First, a municipality could fail to train its employees concerning a clear

requirement to train its officers to deal with "fleeing felons", it is undisputed the City of Muskogee trained its officers, in total compliance with state law, to deal with armed and mentally disturbed individuals. Second, there has not been any evidence presented of a "pattern" of previous constitutional violations which would indicate "inadequate training".

For the first time ever, the Tenth Circuit has held that it is appropriate to analyze *how* officers are trained by the State of Oklahoma and then hold a City liable if someone subsequently alleges the training should have been "different". The *Canton* Court was very explicit in warning that police training programs should not be dissected in this manner. In its caveat, the Court provided:

> Neither will it suffice to prove that an injury or accident could have been avoided if an officer had ***better or more*** training, sufficient to equip him to avoid the particular injury-causing conduct. *Id.* at 1206. (emphasis provided).

In the present case, Plaintiff's only argument is that the officers needed "better" or "more" training. Such second guessing is dangerous and means there is essentially no limit on a city's liability for the actions of its police officers, irrespective of how much time and effort it devotes to training them.

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constitutional duty implicated in recurrent situations that a particular employee is certain to face . . . Second, I think municipal liability for failure to train may be proper where it can be shown that policymakers were aware of, and acquiesed in, a pattern of constitutional violations involving the exercise of police discretion". *Id.* at 397. (emphasis provided).

D. Interpretations of *Canton* in Conflict with the Tenth Circuit's Decision

The Supreme Court clarified the intent of *Canton* in the recent case of *Board of County Com'rs v. Brown*, 117 S. Ct. 1382 (1997). In *Brown*, the plaintiff alleged a deputy sheriff used excessive force when placing her under arrest. The plaintiff filed a § 1983 claim asserting the sheriff violated her constitutional rights by not doing an adequate background check before hiring the deputy. This Court held that the inadequate background check did not meet the "deliberate indifference" standard set forth in *Canton*. *Id.* at 1393. The Court explained the meaning of *Canton* as follows:

> As our decision in Canton makes clear, "deliberate indifference" is a stringent standard of fault, requiring proof that a municipal actor disregarded a known or obvious consequence of his action. *Id.* at 1382.
>
> * * *
>
> [A] plaintiff seeking to establish municipal liability on the theory that a facially lawful municipal action has led an employee to violate a plaintiff's rights must demonstrate that the municipal action was taken with "deliberate indifference" as to its known or obvious consequences. (cite omitted). *A showing of simple or even heightened negligence will not suffice. Id.* at 1390. (emphasis provided).

At best, Plaintiff herein is alleging the City of Muskogee was negligent in how it trained its officers. Plaintiff's own expert, Dr. George Kirkham, did not even contend there was an omission in the State of Oklahoma's or the

City of Muskogee's training programs. To the contrary, Dr. Kirkham opined that, "I *would have to say the officer did – followed the* ***negligent training*** *that he was instructed.*"[6] Negligence alone does not equate to "deliberate indifference".[7]

Other Circuits have addressed similar situations where city employees were trained but the plaintiff felt the training should have been "more" or "better". In *Beddingfield v. City of Pulaski, Tennessee*, 861 F.2d 968 (6th Cir. 1989) the Court provided:

> Plaintiff's central contention is that the City should have adopted *different* training and surveillance measures, presumably those espoused by TCI. Even assuming that TCI's classes would have provided the City's officers with *"better"* training, plaintiff has failed to show that the City deliberately acted with indifference to the danger of Beddingfield's suicide. If the facility's personnel were inadequately trained, *it was the result of negligence* rather than deliberate decision making. *Id.* at 972 (emphasis provided).

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[6] Dr. Kirkham's deposition testimony was attached as an exhibit to Plaintiff's response to all Defendants' Motions for Summary Judgment.

[7] See also *Rhyne v. Henderson County*, 973 F.2d 386, 393 (5th Cir. 1992) (We also cannot find evidence sufficient to create a jury question that the County's failure to provide continuous observation of known suicidal inmates constituted a deliberately indifferent method of conducting suicide watches . . . Arguably the jury might conclude that the Sheriff was *negligent* in not requiring more continuous observation, but that, is not enough under § 1983.) (emphasis provided).

The Tenth Circuit's holding in the present case directly conflicts with the Sixth Circuit. As that Court recognized, a need for "different" training does not equate to a city being "deliberately indifferent" under the standard set forth by *Canton*.

Additionally, in *Mateyko v. Felix*, 924 F.2d 824 (9th Cir. 1991), the plaintiff sued alleging excessive use of force of a laser gun. In dismissing the claim of inadequate training, the Court stated:

> Viewed in a light most favorable to Mateyko, failure to provide a more lengthy training program *suggests at most negligence* on the part of the City in miscalculating the amount of time necessary to adequately prepare its officers. Nothing in the record suggests the City knew it was creating an unjustifiable risk as required by *City of Canton*. *Id.* at 826. (emphasis supplied).

Finally, in *Tapia v. City of Greenwood*, 965 F.2d 336 (7th Cir. 1992), the Court recognized, like in the present case, that the training of Indiana police officers is governed by state law. Consequently, a claim that a city that was in full compliance with state law could be held liable for being deliberately indifferent in its training of police officers could not stand.

> In Indiana, police officer training is governed by state law. Ms. Tapia offered no evidence to indicate that the City failed to adhere to the minimum standards for training police officers under Indiana law . . . The evidence established that the police officers received basic training regarding search warrants, and that the City requires officers to adhere to state law in executing warrantless searches. From this evidence we cannot say that "the need for enhanced training

> [was] so obvious, and the inadequacy of training [was] so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that a jury could reasonably attribute to the policy makers a deliberate indifference to those training needs.

Id. at 339.[8] The Tenth Circuit is clearly in conflict with these various Appellate Courts and the effects of the Tenth Circuit opinion must be recognized.

CLEET is the sole legislatively authorized police training academy in the State of Oklahoma. At the present time there are 558 city police departments and other law enforcement agencies in the State of Oklahoma that are employing CLEET trained officers.[9] If a jury

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[8] See also *Brown v. Bryan County, OK*, 53 F.3d 1410, 1424-1425 (5th Cir. 1995), 117 S.Ct. 1382 (1997) (A review of the record reveals that Sheriff Moore had enrolled Burns in the state-mandated Council on Law Enforcement and Training (CLEET) program while he worked as a Reserve Deputy. **As there is no evidence that Sheriff Moore did anything less than that which is required by law, we do not find the training was inadequate.**)

[9] CLEET was created by the Oklahoma State Legislature to regulate the employment, certification, and training of police officers in Oklahoma. Among other duties, state statutes direct CLEET to:

> Title 70 O.S. § 3311 (B)(2): Promulgate rules and regulations with respect to such matters as certification, revocation and withdrawal of certification, minimum courses of study, testing and test scores, attendance requirements, equipment and facilities, minimum qualifications for instructors, minimum standards for basic and advanced in-service courses, and seminars for Oklahoma police and peace officers.

determines that CLEET failed to properly train these officers on how to deal with armed and mentally disturbed persons, then each one of these 558 agencies could

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Additionally, CLEET sets the minimum training requirements for every police officer in the State of Oklahoma. State statutes specifically provide that:

> Title 70 O.S. § 3311 (D)(2): No person shall be certified as a police officer in this state unless . . . that person has satisfactorily completed a basic police course of not less than one hundred twenty (120) hours of accredited instruction for reserve police officers and reserve deputies and not less than three hundred (300) hours for full-time salaried police or peace officers from the Council or curriculum or course of study approved by the Council. Said training shall include training in crime and drug prevention, crisis intervention, and youth and family intervention techniques.

In 1992, CLEET promulgated an additional rule that is directly relevant to the present case. Title 70 O.S. § 3311.5 **Law enforcement certification – Minimum required hours of education and training** provides:

> By September 1, 1992, the Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training . . . shall include in its required courses of study for law enforcement certification a minimum of four (4) hours of education and training and at least one (1) hour of continuing law enforcement training relating to recognizing and managing a person appearing to require mental health treatment or services.

It is not disputed that the police officers involved in the present case were required to, and did attend, the CLEET Training Academy. These officers consequently met all state requirements for becoming certified police officers and have maintained that status through continuing education and training. Additional training received by the officers is set forth in the following undisputed facts.

be held "deliberately indifferent" to the constitutional rights of their citizens. This would be true simply because the city complied with state law and sent it officers to statutorily mandated CLEET training courses.

It is equally important to recognize that each time a person now believes they were wronged by a police officer, that individual can file a § 1983 claim asking for an evaluation of that city's officers training program. Regardless of whether or not that officer may have had years of training in a particular field of law, that plaintiff will be able to go to a jury as long as an expert will state the officer's training was *improper*. This was clearly not the intent of *Canton*.

E. "Federalism" Does Not Allow a Federal Court to Second-Guess State Training Programs

Importantly, the *Canton* Court explained the significance of its requirement for a strict "deliberate indifference" standard by stating:

> [P]ermitting cases against cities for their "failure to train" employees to go forward under § 1983 on a lesser standard of fault would result in de facto respondeat superior liability on municipalities – a result we rejected in *Monell* . . . **It would also engage the federal courts in an endless exercise of second-guessing municipal employee-training programs. This is an exercise we believe the federal courts are ill suited to undertake, as well as one that would implicate serious questions of federalism.** *Id.* at 392 (emphasis provided).

It cannot be disputed that the Tenth Circuit has engaged in second-guessing both the State of Oklahoma and the City of Muskogee's training programs. Both the State, under its statutorily created CLEET program, and the City of Muskogee train officers extensively on how to deal with armed and mentally disturbed individuals. "Serious questions of federalism" are raised when the Tenth Circuit instructs Federal Courts to analyze State and municipal training programs and, in effect, direct these institutions in how to run their programs if it believes training is incorrect.

An analogous factual situation was addressed by this Court in *Rizzo v. Goode*, 423 U.S. 362 (1976). *Rizzo* involved a class action that was filed in Federal District Court against the Mayor of Philadelphia, the City's Police Commissioner, "and others" alleging widespread mistreatment of the citizens of the City of Philadelphia. After hearing evidence with regard to these complaints, the Federal Court required the defendants to submit a comprehensive program for improving the areas of law enforcement which were deemed deficient. The Police Commissioner was then ordered to put this program into effect.

The Police Commissioner disputed the District Court's right to regulate the operations of the City of Philadelphia Police Department. As it was stated by the District Court:

> In the course of these proceedings, much of the argument has been directed toward the proposition that *courts should not attempt to supervise the functionings of the police department. Id.* at 369.

The District Court reached the conclusion that "contrary to the defendants' assertions, the Court's legal power to do just that is firmly established." This Court then granted certiorari:

> [t]o consider petitioner's claims that the judgment of the District Court represents an unwarranted intrusion by the federal judiciary into the discretionary authority committed to them by state and local law to perform their official functions. *Id.* at 366.

The plaintiffs argued that § 1983 specifically allowed for suits "in equity" to protect against violations of constitutional rights. This Court found that argument, as it pertained to interfering with a state law enforcement agency, contrary to the principles of federalism and stated:

> When, as here, the exercise of authority by state officials is attacked, federal courts must be constantly mindful of the "special delicacy of the adjustment between federal equitable power and State Administration of its own law". *Id.* at 378. Quoting *Stefanelli v. Minard*, 342 U.S. 117 (1951).
>
> * * *
>
> When the frame of reference moves from a unitary system, governed by the principles just stated, to a system of courts representing the Nation, subsisting side by side with 50 state, legislative, and executive branches, appropriate consideration must be given to principles of federalism in determining the availability and scope of equitable relief. *Id.* at 379. *Doran v. Salem Inn, Inc.*, 422 U.S. 922 (1975).

This Court ultimately held that principles of federalism foreclosed the Federal District Court from attempting to regulate the operations of the Philadelphia Police Department.

Although *Rizzo* was a case involving a request for equitable relief, the principles of federalism that were at issue are relevant to the present case. The State of Oklahoma and the City of Muskogee train officers to deal with numerous areas of law enforcement. The discretionary authority of *how* to train these officers is granted to them by the State of Oklahoma and its legislative body. The Federal Courts should not have the authority to override these state officials and direct how these programs should be run.

The issue of federalism was addressed more recently in the case of *Printz v. United States*, 117 S. Ct. 2365 (1997). The issue in *Printz* was whether Congress could require local law enforcement officials to enforce the provision of the Federal Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act.

> The question presented is whether certain interim provisions the Brady Handgun Violence Protection Act . . . commanding state and local law enforcement officers to conduct background checks on prospective handgun purchasers and to perform related tasks, violate the Constitution. *Id.* at 2367.

This Court held the Federal Government does not have the authority to order state law enforcement officials to implement government programs due to federalism concerns.

> The power of the Federal Government would be augmented immeasurably if it were able to

> impress into its service – and at no cost to itself – the police officers for the 50 states. *Id.* at 2378.
>
> * * *
>
> '[T]he constitution protects us from our own best intentions: It divides power among sovereigns and among branches of government precisely so that we may resist the temptation to concentrate power in one location as an expedient solution to the crisis of the day. Quoting *New York v. United States*, 505 U.S. 144, 187 (1992).'
>
> We adhere to that principle today, and conclude categorically, as we concluded categorically in New York: 'The federal Government may not compel the States to enact or administer a federal regulatory program.' *Id.* at 188.

The holdings of *Rizzo* and *Printz* ring clear with one message. The Federal Government, including the Federal Judiciary, does not have the authority under this Nation's dual system of government, to promulgate rules, or otherwise direct, the operations of a state branch of government. This includes municipal and state law enforcement training programs.[10]

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[10] The Sixth Circuit addressed a similar factual situation in *Russo v. City of Cincinnati*, 953 F.2d 1036 (6th Cir. 1992). In finding that the majority failed to correctly interpret *Canton*, the dissent warned that:

> Claims of inadequate training test fundamental considerations of judicial constraint. First, when a federal court reviews municipal or state executive conduct or policy, as here, **it must be careful not to violate principles of federalism**. Second, **the federal judiciary must remain ever-mindful of its limited**

IV. CONCLUSION

In *Canton*, this Court specifically warned against Federal Courts overstepping their authority and attempting to regulate state and municipal training programs. Principles of federalism do not allow for Federal Courts to circumvent the states' rights to train police officers in the manner the states deem appropriate. There are six states under the jurisdiction of the Tenth Circuit.[11]

Consequently, there are now thousands of police agencies that can be held liable for "inadequate training" under § 1983 despite the amount of time and resources that a city puts into its training program. The City of Muskogee provided training for its officers above and beyond what was required by state law in dealing with armed and mentally disturbed individuals. It is simply a contradiction in terms to state this City may have been "deliberately indifferent" to its citizens when extensive training was required in the very area of law enforcement in question. *Canton* did not intend such a result and the Tenth Circuit's opinion should not be allowed to stand.

> **competence regarding executive functions, such as the formulation and administration of training programs.**
>
> **In order to safeguard our system of federalism** and limit the judiciary to the ambit of its competence, the Supreme Court imposed the exacting deliberate indifference requirement. *Id.* at 1050. (emphasis supplied).

[11] Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, and Oklahoma.

For the reasons set forth above, Petitioner respectfully request that its Petition for a Writ of Certiorari to review the opinion of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marilyn ALLEN, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, deceased, Plaintiff-Appellant,

v.

MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA, a municipal corporation; Don Smith, Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull, Defendants-Appellees.

No. 96-7021.

United States Court of Appeals,
Tenth Circuit.

July 17, 1997.

Personal representative of suspect's estate brought § 1983 action against police officers and city, alleging use of excessive force and inadequate training. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, Frank H. Seay, Chief Judge, granted summary judgment to officers and city, and personal representative appealed. The Court of Appeals, Paul J. Kelly, Jr., Circuit Judge, held that: (1) that genuine issues of material fact precluded summary judgment for officer, and, per Briscoe, Circuit Judge, and (2) that genuine issues of material fact precluded summary judgment for city.

Reversed and remanded.

Paul J. Kelly, Jr., Circuit Judge, dissented in part with separate opinion.

Juliet N. Brennan, Albert R. Matthews, Bonds, Matthews, Bonds & Hayes, Muskogee, OK, for Plaintiff-Appellant.

Woodrow K. Glass (Reggie N. Whitten, with him on the brief), Mills & Whitten, Oklahoma City, OK, Jim T. Priest, David Walls, and Cathy A. Warden, McKinney, Stringer & Webster, P.C., Oklahoma City, OK, for Defendants-Appellees.

Before KELLY, BRISCOE, and LUCERO, Circuit Judges.

PAUL KELLY, Jr., Circuit Judge.

Plaintiff-Appellant Marilyn Allen appeals from an adverse ruling on her civil rights claim under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 as personal representative, alleging that the defendants used excessive force against her deceased husband in violation of the Fourth Amendment. The district court granted summary judgment to the individual Defendant-Appellee police officers on the ground that they did not violate the Fourth Amendment. Having determined that no constitutional violation occurred, the court also granted summary judgment to Defendant-Appellee City of Muskogee. Our jurisdiction arises under 28 U.S.C. § 1291. A unanimous panel reverses the judgment as to the individual officers, and a divided panel reverses as to the city.

Background

On the morning of February 20, 1994, Terry Allen left his home after an altercation with his wife and children. He took ammunition and several guns with him, and later parked in front of the Muskogee residence of his sister, Rhonda Lee-Oakley. The altercation was reported to the Wagoner County Sheriff's Department, which sent

a teletype to the Muskogee Police Department (MPD), describing Mr. Allen and his car and advising that Mr. Allen was armed and had threatened family members. The teletype also advised that there was a 1983 warrant outstanding for Mr. Allen's arrest for impersonating an officer. Lt. Donald Smith of the MPD relayed the information to other officers during a squad meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Some time after the meeting, Lt. Smith was advised that Mr. Allen might be at his sister's house in Muskogee. Before he could meet with other officers, a radio dispatcher advised him that a 911 call had been made from Ms. Oakley's home and that Mr. Allen was threatening suicide. Lt. Smith proceeded to the Oakley home, approached the bystanders who were standing near Mr. Allen's vehicle, and ordered them to step back, which they did. Mr. Allen was sitting in the driver's seat with one foot out of the vehicle. He had a gun in his right hand, which was resting on the console between the seats.

As Lt. Smith repeatedly told Mr. Allen to drop his gun, Officer Bentley McDonald arrived and joined Lt. Smith at the driver's side door. Lt. Smith then reached into the vehicle and attempted to seize Mr. Allen's gun, while Officer Bentley held Mr. Allen's left arm. Officer Bryan Farmer, who arrived with Officer Bentley, approached Mr. Allen's car from the passenger side, and attempted to open a passenger side door. Mr. Allen reacted by pointing the gun toward Officer Farmer, who ducked and moved behind the car. Mr. Allen then swung the gun toward Lt. Smith and Officer McDonald, and shots were exchanged. Lt. Smith and Officer McDonald fired a total of twelve rounds into the vehicle, striking

Mr. Allen four times. The entire sequence, from the time Lt. Smith arrived to the time Mr. Allen was killed, lasted approximately ninety seconds.

Plaintiff brought this § 1983 claim against the officers involved and against the City of Muskogee. Defendants subsequently moved for summary judgment, and set forth a statement of facts in their brief supporting the motion. In her response, Plaintiff did not dispute Defendants' statement of facts. The district court granted Defendants' motion, holding that there was no genuine issue of material fact and that Defendants were entitled to judgment as a matter of law.

Discussion

We review the grant of summary judgment de novo, and apply the same legal standard used by the district court under Rule 56(c). *Goldsmith v. Learjet, Inc.*, 90 F.3d 1490, 1493 (10th Cir.1996). Summary judgment is appropriate only if "there is no genuine issue as to any material fact and . . . the moving party is entitled to a judgment as a matter of law." Fed.R.Civ.P. 56(c). A disputed fact is "material" if it might affect the outcome of the suit under the governing law, and the dispute is "genuine" if the evidence is such that a reasonable jury could return a verdict for the nonmoving party. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242, 248, 106 S.Ct. 2505, 2509, 91 L.Ed.2d 202 (1986). We construe the factual record and reasonable inferences therefrom in the light most favorable to the nonmovant. *Gullickson v. Southwest Airlines Pilots' Assoc.*, 87 F.3d 1176, 1183 (10th Cir.1996).

The moving party need not affirmatively negate the nonmovant's claim in order to obtain summary judgment. *Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 322-23, 106 S.Ct. 2548, 2551-52, 91 L.Ed.2d 265 (1986). Instead, the movant only bears the initial burden of " 'showing' – that is, pointing out to the district court – that there is an absence of evidence to support the nonmoving party's case." *Id.* at 325, 106 S.Ct. at 2554.

In granting summary judgment, the district court went beyond the agreed-upon facts and made its own findings. The court found, for example, that the officers knew that Mr. Allen had claimed to have killed three people before arriving at his sister's home. Whether the officers knew does not alter our review, but Plaintiff is correct in pointing out that the court's finding is not supported by the record.

Although the Supreme Court has said that findings of fact are sometimes helpful to an appeals court on summary judgment review, *Anderson*, 477 U.S. at 250 n. 6, 106 S.Ct. at 2511 n. 6, the district court on summary judgment should determine "whether . . . there are any genuine factual issues that properly can be resolved only by a finder of fact," *id.* at 250, 106 S.Ct. at 2510. In this sense, traditional "findings of fact" are inappropriate in a summary judgment order, because if summary judgment is proper no findings of fact need be made and the case can be resolved as a matter of law. We read *Anderson* to mean only that it may be helpful when the district court summarizes undisputed facts. *See Regalado v. City of Commerce City*, 20 F.3d 1104, 1108 n. 1 (10th Cir.1994) (findings of fact are not required, but the *reasons* for granting summary judgment should be stated in the record).

I. The Individual Officers

We analyze a § 1983 claim of excessive force by determining whether the officers' actions were objectively reasonable in light of the surrounding facts and circumstances. *Graham v. Connor,* 490 U.S. 386, 397, 109 S.Ct. 1865, 1872, 104 L.Ed.2d 443 (1989); *Thompson v. City of Lawrence, Kan.,* 58 F.3d 1511, 1516 (10th Cir.1995). The district court found no genuine issues of material fact, and held that the officers acted in an objectively reasonable way. We conclude, however, that the individual Defendants failed to carry their initial burden of demonstrating the absence of a genuine issue of material fact.

The excessive force inquiry includes not only the officers' actions at the moment that the threat was presented, but also may include their actions in the moments leading up to the suspect's threat of force. *Sevier v. City of Lawrence, Kan.,* 60 F.3d 695, 699 (10th Cir.1995). Of course, the use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer "on the scene," who is "often forced to make split-second judgments . . . about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation." *Graham,* 490 U.S. at 396-97, 109 S.Ct. at 1871-72. However, as we stated in *Sevier:* "[t]he reasonableness of Defendants' actions depends both on whether the officers were in danger at the precise moment that they used force and on whether Defendants' own reckless or deliberate conduct during the seizure unreasonably created the need to use such force." 60 F.3d at 699. We will thus consider an officer's conduct prior to the suspect's threat of force if the conduct is "immediately connected" to the suspect's

threat of force. *Romero v. Board of County Comm'rs*, 60 F.3d 702, 705 n. 5 (10th Cir.1995), *cert. denied*, ___ U.S. ___, 116 S.Ct. 776, 133 L.Ed.2d 728 (1996); *Bella v. Chamberlain*, 24 F.3d 1251, 1256 n. 7 (10th Cir.1994), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 1109, 115 S.Ct. 898, 130 L.Ed.2d 783 (1995); *see also Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1, 8-9, 105 S.Ct. 1694, 1699-700, 85 L.Ed.2d 1 (1985) (objective reasonableness inquiry requires courts to examine "whether the totality of the circumstances justified a particular sort of search or seizure").

The Defendants have not shown that there is a lack of a genuine issue of material fact with regard to the officers' reasonableness. *See Celotex*, 477 U.S. at 325, 106 S.Ct. at 2553. Indeed, it seems to us that Defendants have pointed out the presence of a genuine issue. Defendants acknowledged before the district court that there are differences among the eyewitness depositions. For example, some deposition testimony indicates that Lt. Smith ran "screaming" up to Mr. Allen's car and immediately began shouting at Mr. Allen to get out of his car; other testimony indicates that Lt. Smith approached cautiously, and tried talking Mr. Allen into giving up the gun.

Appellees label these disputes as "minor," but the substantive law indicates otherwise. *See Romero*, 60 F.3d at 705 n. 5 (an officer's conduct prior to the suspect's threat of force is relevant if the conduct is "immediately connected" to the suspect's threat of force). The entire incident, from the time Lt. Smith arrived to the time of the shooting, took only ninety seconds. Clearly, the officers' preceding actions were so "immediately connected" to Mr. Allen's threat of force that they should be included

in the reasonableness inquiry. The differences in eyewitness testimony regarding the officers' approach are therefore material factual disputes. *Anderson*, 477 U.S. at 248, 106 S.Ct. at 2509 (holding that the substantive law determines whether a disputed fact is material).

The disputes are not only material, but they are also genuine. A dispute about a material fact is genuine if the evidence is such that a reasonable jury could return a verdict for the nonmoving party. *Anderson*, 477 U.S. at 248, 106 S.Ct. at 2509. While we express no opinion on the merits, a reasonable jury could conclude on the basis of some of the testimony presented that the officers' actions were reckless and precipitated the need to use deadly force. *See Sevier*, 60 F.3d at 699.

BRISCOE, Circuit Judge.

II. The City of Muskogee

The plaintiff also claimed the City of Muskogee was liable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for inadequate training of the individually-sued police officers. After the district court determined the individual officers committed no constitutional violation, the court granted summary judgment to the City, reasoning that municipal liability requires a constitutional violation by the officers. Even assuming the court correctly interpreted that law of municipal liability, a question we need not and do not resolve, the court erred in entering summary judgment on that ground because we have concluded plaintiff presented sufficient evidence that the officers committed a

constitutional violation to withstand a summary judgment motion. We review the propriety of summary judgment for the City de novo and find sufficient support for plaintiff's claim against the City to withstand summary judgment.

Once the moving party has carried its burden, Rule 56(e) "requires the nonmoving party to go beyond the pleadings and by . . . affidavits, or by the 'depositions, answers to interrogatories, and admissions on file,' designate 'specific facts showing that there is a genuine issue for trial.' " *Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 324, 106 S.Ct. 2548, 2553, 91 L.Ed.2d 265 (1986). "[T]he plain language of Rule 56(c) mandates the entry of summary judgment after adequate time for discovery and upon motion, against a party who fails to make a showing sufficient to establish the existence of an element essential to that party's case, and on which that party will bear the burden of proof at trial." *Id.* at 322, 106 S.Ct. at 2552.

"[T]he inadequacy of police training may serve as a basis for § 1983 liability only where the failure to train amounts to deliberate indifference to the rights of persons with whom the police come into contact." *City of Canton v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378, 388, 109 S.Ct. 1197, 1204, 103 L.Ed.2d 412 (1989). To establish a city's liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for inadequate training of police officers in the use of force, a plaintiff must show (1) the officers exceeded constitutional limitations on the use of force; (2) the use of force arose under circumstances that constitute a usual and recurring situation with which police officers must deal; (3) the inadequate training demonstrates a deliberate indifference on the part of the city toward persons with whom the police officers come into contact,

and (4) there is a direct causal link between the constitutional deprivation and the inadequate training. *Zuchel v. City and County of Denver*, 997 F.2d 730, 734-35 (10th Cir.1993). *See Canton*, 489 U.S. at 389-91, 109 S.Ct. at 1204-05. As regards the second and third requirements, a showing of specific incidents which establish a pattern of constitutional violations is not necessary to put the City on notice that its training program is inadequate. Rather, evidence of a single violation of federal rights, accompanied by a showing that a municipality has failed to train its employees to handle recurring situations presenting an obvious potential for such a violation, is sufficient to trigger municipal liability. *See Board of County Com'rs v. Brown*, ___ U.S. ___, 117 S.Ct. 1382, 137 L.Ed.2d 626 (1997); *Canton*, 489 U.S. at 390 n. 10, 109 S.Ct. at 1205.

The first requirement is satisfied here because, as concluded in Section I of this opinion, there was evidence in the record to support the claim that the officers exceeded constitutional limitations on the use of force. As regards the second requirement, exhibits presented to the district court contained evidence that it was common for officers to have to deal with mentally ill or emotionally disturbed people and people under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Nor is it uncommon for officers to have to deal with persons armed with deadly weapons. Thus, there was evidence that the use of force arose under circumstances that constituted a usual and recurring situation with which police officers must deal.

The third requirement is also satisfied. The record supports an inference that the training demonstrates a deliberate indifference on the part of the City toward

people with whom the police come into contact. In *Canton*, the Court explained when inadequate police training constitutes city policy:

> [I]t may happen that in light of the duties assigned to specific officers or employees the need for more or different training is so obvious, and the inadequacy so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that the policymakers of the city can reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need. In that event, the failure to provide proper training may fairly be said to represent a policy for which the city is responsible, and for which the city may be held liable if it actually causes injury.

489 U.S. at 390, 109 S.Ct. at 1205. The Court noted:

> For example, city policymakers know to a moral certainty that their police officers will be required to arrest fleeing felons. The city has armed its officers with firearms, in part to allow them to accomplish this task Thus, the need to train officers in the constitutional limitations on the use of deadly force, can be said to be "so obvious," that failure to do so could properly be characterized as "deliberate indifference" to constitutional rights.

Id., n. 10, 109 S.Ct. at 1205 (citation omitted).

There was evidence presented to the district court that the officers received inadequate training on how to deal with mentally ill or emotionally upset persons who are armed with firearms. Plaintiff relied principally on her expert witness, Dr. George Kirkham, a former police officer and college professor and now a consultant on

police and security matters. The record does not show that defendants challenged Dr. Kirkham's qualifications as an expert on police tactics and procedures.

Dr. Kirkham testified in his deposition that the officers' actions were reckless and totally contrary to proper police practices for dealing with armed mentally ill or emotionally upset persons. According to Dr. Kirkham, all authorities on police tactics and procedures, in both the law enforcement and expert witness communities, agree it is not appropriate to leave cover and approach a suicidal armed person to try to take away a gun. Such action is likely to provoke a violent response, resulting in a high risk of death to officers, the armed person, and other civilians. Dr. Kirkham stated the proper procedure would have been for the officers to take cover behind their police cars, to ask the people standing by Allen's car to come toward them in order to get them out of harm's way and to obtain information, and then to try to communicate with Allen from a safe position without doing anything aggressive that could provoke a violent response.

In Dr. Kirkham's opinion, there were only two possibilities that could give rise to the present incident – either the officers failed to follow their training or they were improperly trained. Lieutenant Brook, the Muskogee Police Department training coordinator from 1984 to 1993, testified the officers acted in accordance with their training in approaching the car and trying to take away the gun. Relying principally on this testimony, Dr. Kirkham concluded the officers' training was inadequate. Dr. Kirkham was also aware that Lieutenant Smith testified he acted in accordance with his police training.

Moreover, the affidavit of Glen McIntyre, the state firearms training coordinator, stated the officers followed their training. The evidence supports an inference that the City trained its officers to leave cover and approach armed suicidal persons to try to disarm them.

Dr. Kirkham was highly critical of the officers' training:

> I don't believe you'll find any reputable expert in the United States, no one that I know of, that could possibly take the position in contradiction of virtually every piece of training material that I have ever seen that says you handle it in this way. These are such well established principles. I don't think a reputable specialist could say, "Hey, yeah. You walk-up to the situation, stand in the open, keep trying to grab the gun."
>
> It is just reckless behavior.

Appellant's append. III at 572. He stated if the officers were trained to respond to this kind of call by staying in the open, leaving innocent people in the open, and doing provocative things like trying to grab the gun and get into the car, the training was "out of synch with the entire United States in terms of what police are being trained to do." *Id.* at 576.

> To my knowledge, I'm not aware of any significant debate in the law enforcement or expert witness community about the fundamental principles we're talking about here. Cover is better than no cover. Communicating from a safe distance is better than not. Getting innocent people as safely out of the way as possible is desirable. Not engaging in certain actions with

> mentally disturbed armed people, not getting close to them is preferable.
>
> I've never heard any knowledgeable debate or argument about any of those subjects in the 25 years I've been doing this type of work.

Id. at 580. Referring to the training provided the officers through a state program, Dr. Kirkham stated:

> If the State of Oklahoma through CLEET trains their officers to not be mindful of cover, to be aggressive with mentally ill people, do all these things that are totally off the board, then the State is wrong and out of synch with the rest of the country in the police profession.

Id. at 592-93.

When read as a whole and viewed in the light most favorable to the plaintiff as the party opposing summary judgment, the record supports an inference that the City trained its officers to leave cover and approach armed suicidal, emotionally disturbed persons and to try to disarm them, a practice contrary to proper police procedures and tactical principles.

The testimony of Lieutenant Brook and Lieutenant Smith and the affidavit of Glen McIntyre support an inference that the content of the training was inadequate. The City points to evidence that the officers completed many hours of training, including training on use of deadly force and dealing with upset or mentally disturbed people, but that cannot rebut the inference that the training was inadequate because it does not address the content of that training.

Relying on *Evers v. General Motors Corp.*, 770 F.2d 984 (11th Cir.1985), the City argues Kirkham's deposition must be disregarded as insufficient to raise genuine issues of material fact regarding the adequacy of the training. In *Evers*, the court held a four-paragraph affidavit by plaintiff's expert witness was insufficient to create genuine issues of material fact because its conclusory allegations were not based on specific facts. Dr. Kirkham's deposition is not comparable to the brief conclusory affidavit in *Evers*. The deposition is over 300 pages in length and Dr. Kirkham's opinion was based on specific facts in the record. His extensive and detailed testimony shows that although he may not have read all relevant documents, he was very familiar with the circumstances of the incident. *See Russo v. City of Cincinnati*, 953 F.2d 1036, 1046-47 (6th Cir.1992) (rejecting argument that testimony of plaintiff's expert in police procedures was conclusory and insufficient to preserve genuine question of material fact over city's liability). *Cf. Baker v. Putnal*, 75 F.3d 190, 199 (5th Cir.1996) (unsubstantiated conclusions in affidavit of purported expert insufficient to preclude summary judgment in favor of city); *Benavides v. County of Wilson*, 955 F.2d 968, 973 (5th Cir.) (deposition of purported expert giving only subjective opinion not based on factual foundation or proven expertise insufficient to preclude summary judgment in favor of city), *cert. denied* 506 U.S. 824, 113 S.Ct. 79, 121 L.Ed.2d 43 (1992); *Allen v. Cook*, 668 F.Supp. 1460 (W.D.Okla.1987) (unsubstantiated conclusions in affidavit of plaintiff's expert insufficient to preclude summary judgment in favor of city).

Dr. Kirkham characterized the officers' actions in this case as diametrically opposed to proper police procedures, out of synch with the rest of the police profession, and "plain foolishness." Because there was evidence that the officers acted in accordance with their training, his criticism also applied to their training. When viewed in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, the record contains evidence that the officers were trained to act recklessly in a manner that created a high risk of death. The evidence is sufficient to support an inference that the need for different training was so obvious and the inadequacy so likely to result in violation of constitutional rights that the policymakers of the City could reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need.[1]

As regards the fourth requirement, there was evidence of a direct causal link between the training and the alleged constitutional deprivation. According to Dr. Kirkham, approaching and trying to grab a gun from an emotionally disturbed, suicidal person created a high risk of death for officers, the armed person, and other civilians, and was reckless. There was evidence the officers were trained to act in such manner and, thus, were trained to do precisely the wrong thing. The causal link between the officers' training and the alleged constitutional deprivation is more direct than in cases in which officers are not given enough training to know the correct

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[1] There is no contention that the training given the officers was anything other than official city policy and Lieutenant Brook's testimony that the officers followed their training in handling the incident tends to show it was official policy. He was the training coordinator from 1984 to 1993.

response to a dangerous situation. Dr. Kirkham attributed the incident to improper training, stating: "[I]f police trainers in the State of Oklahoma are using this case as an example of how you properly handle a mentally ill individual, then police officers will assuredly die, and other mentally ill people and probably innocent people will die." Appellant's append. III at 574. It was his opinion that if the officers had been properly trained in the fundamental principles of maintaining a covered position and trying to communicate with armed emotionally upset persons rather than approaching and physically attempting to disarm them, the incident would not have happened.

Because there was evidence supporting each of the requirements of *Canton,* as explained in *Zuchel,* the district court erred in entering summary judgment in favor of the City. *City of Oklahoma City v. Tuttle,* 471 U.S. 808, 105 S.Ct. 2427, 85 L.Ed.2d 791 (1985), does not require a different conclusion. In *Tuttle,* the Court held it was error to instruct a jury it could infer from a single incident of unusually excessive force that the constitutional violation was attributable to a city policy of inadequate training or supervision. Here, plaintiff does not rely solely on proof of the single incident to support an inference that the incident was caused by inadequate training and that the inadequate training was city policy. She relies on evidence that the officers followed police training in recklessly rushing Allen's car and trying to disarm him. *Tuttle* and *Canton* do not require evidence of more than one incident to establish a policy of inadequate training and that the training caused the constitutional deprivation. These cases simply require evidence in addition to the

occurrence of a single incident. A plaintiff can properly rely on the single incident if there is other evidence of inadequate training. *See Vineyard v. County of Murray*, 990 F.2d 1207, 1212-14 (11th Cir.), *cert. denied* 510 U.S. 1024, 114 S.Ct. 636, 126 L.Ed.2d 594 (1993); *Russo*, 953 F.2d at 1041, 1046-48; *Bordanaro v. McLeod*, 871 F.2d 1151, 1159-63 (1st Cir.), *cert. denied* 493 U.S. 820, 110 S.Ct. 75, 107 L.Ed.2d 42 (1989); *Grandstaff v. City of Borger*, 767 F.2d 161, 169-72 (5th Cir.1985); *Diaz v. Salazar*, 924 F.Supp. 1088, 1098-99 (D.N.M.1996). By providing direct evidence of inadequate training, as discussed above, plaintiff provided sufficient evidence beyond the occurrence of the single incident to withstand summary judgment.

Nor does *Brown*, ___ U.S. ___, 117 S.Ct. 1382, 137 L.Ed.2d 626, require a different result. The case before us is within the "narrow range of circumstances" recognized by *Canton* and left intact by *Brown*, under which a single violation of federal rights may be a highly predictable consequence of failure to train officers to handle recurring situations with an obvious potential for such a violation. The likelihood that officers will frequently have to deal with armed emotionally upset persons, and the predictability that officers trained to leave cover, approach, and attempt to disarm such persons will provoke a violent response, could justify a finding that the City's failure to properly train its officers reflected deliberate indifference to the obvious consequence of the City's choice. The likelihood of a violent response to this type of police action also may support an inference of causation – that the City's indifference led directly to the very consequence that was so predictable.

REVERSED and REMANDED.

KELLY, Circuit Judge, dissenting in part.

I respectfully dissent from Section II of the court's opinion. Permitting this case against Muskogee to go forward reverses the burden that the Supreme Court has deliberately chosen to place on the party opposing a motion for summary judgment. It also is inconsistent with the strict standard placed upon § 1983 plaintiffs in cases such as this one, where there has been absolutely no showing of a pattern of constitutional violations which might have put the City of Muskogee on notice that its training program was inadequate. *See Board of the County Comm'rs v. Brown*, ___ U.S. ___, ___, 117 S.Ct. 1382, 1391, 137 L.Ed.2d 626 (1997); *City of Canton v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378, 390 n. 10, 109 S.Ct. 1197, 1205, 103 L.Ed.2d 412 (1989).

The court views this case as one in which "evidence of a single violation of federal rights, accompanied by a showing that a municipality has failed to train its employees to handle recurring situations presenting an obvious potential for such a violation . . . trigger[s] municipal liability." *Brown*, ___ U.S. at ___, 117 S.Ct. at 1391 (citing *Canton*, 489 U.S. at 390 & n. 10, 109 S.Ct. at 1205). Although sufficient evidence of a single violation of federal rights exists, Ms. Allen has not made any showing – much less a sufficient showing – of an inadequate policy, nor is there proof that the allegedly inadequate policy presented such an "obvious potential" for constitutional harm that liability can or should be triggered.

The evidence is insufficient to establish the inadequacy of Muskogee's training because absolutely no evidence exists regarding the content of Muskogee's

training. The court observes that none of the evidence in this case addresses the content of Muskogee's training, and assumes that it was Defendants' burden to put forward that content. *See* Ct. Op. at 843. The summary judgment standard, however, clearly places that burden on Ms. Allen. *See Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 322, 106 S.Ct. 2548, 2551, 91 L.Ed.2d 265 (1986) (stating that the plain language of Fed. R. Civ P. 56(c) mandates entry of summary judgment if nonmoving party fails to make a showing sufficient to establish an element, and on which that party will bear the burden of proof at trial). Ms. Allen does not dispute that the Muskogee training exceeds Oklahoma's requirements for law enforcement training. In fact, the only evidence on the content of Muskogee's training at all are affidavits of two law enforcement officials that the individual officers acted in accord with that training. Ms. Allen's expert, Dr. Kirkham, stated that because the officers' actions were, in his opinion, contrary to proper police practices, and because two law enforcement officials stated that the officers acted in accord with their training, then Muskogee's training must have been inadequate. Dr. Kirkham admitted, however, that he had not read either Muskogee's or Oklahoma's training materials. The court emphasizes that this evidence supports an "inference" that the City of Muskogee inadequately trained its police officers.[1] Although we must draw all factual inferences in

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[1] At the end of Section II, this "inference," *see* Ct. Op. at 843, has metamorphosed into "direct evidence" of inadequate training, *see* Ct. Op. at 844-45.

favor of the nonmovant, those inferences must be reasonable. *Gullickson v. Southwest Airlines Pilots' Assoc.*, 87 F.3d 1176, 1183 (10th Cir.1996) (citing *Matsushita Elec. Indus. Co. v. Zenith Radio Corp.*, 475 U.S. 574, 587, 106 S.Ct. 1348, 1356, 89 L.Ed.2d 538 (1986)). Dr. Kirkham's testimony, grounded in speculation, may raise an inference that Muskogee inadequately trained its officers, but it is not sufficient to withstand summary judgment. Rather, this inference, if it can be so called, constitutes, at best, a "mere scintilla" of evidence, on which a judgment in favor of the nonmovant cannot be upheld. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242, 252, 106 S.Ct. 2505, 2511, 91 L.Ed.2d 202 (1986).

Even assuming that Ms. Allen has put forward sufficient evidence of inadequate training, that is still not enough under the circumstances. The evidence is not even close to establishing the kind of inadequate training that is "so obvious, and . . . so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that the policymakers of the city can reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need." *Canton*, 489 U.S. at 390, 109 S.Ct. at 1205. In most cases, plaintiffs meet this standard by demonstrating that a pattern of constitutional violations has put the municipality on notice that its training is inadequate, and that the municipality's continued adherence to its training thus constitutes deliberate indifference. *See, e.g., Brown*, ___ U.S. at ___, 117 S.Ct. at 1390 ("If a program does not prevent constitutional violations, municipal decisionmakers may eventually be on notice that a new program is called for."); *Zuchel v. City and County of Denver*, 997 F.2d 730, 740-41 (10th Cir.1993) (holding that the defendant municipality was deliberately

indifferent when it failed to change its training despite six deadly force incidents within a six-week time period, and despite repeated requests by the district attorney for new training). In this case, however, there is no allegation that previous similar incidents had put the City of Muskogee on notice that its training was inadequate. The Supreme Court has cautioned that in such cases, plaintiffs will succeed only in a "narrow range of circumstances." *Brown*, ___ U.S. at ___, 117 S.Ct. at 1391. Thus, Ms. Allen must prove deliberate indifference by showing that a violation of federal rights was a "highly predictable" consequence of its failure to adequately train its police officers. *Id.* The mere fact that city police officers may have acted unconstitutionally cannot be the basis for municipal liability. *Monell v. Department of Soc. Servs.*, 436 U.S. 658, 691, 98 S.Ct. 2018, 2035, 56 L.Ed.2d 611 (1977) ("[A] municipality cannot be held liable under § 1983 on a respondeat superior theory."); *see also City of Oklahoma City v. Tuttle*, 471 U.S. 808, 823-24, 105 S.Ct. 2427, 2436-37, 85 L.Ed.2d 791 (1985) (plurality opinion) ("Proof of a single incident of unconstitutional activity is not sufficient to impose liability under *Monell*, unless proof of the incident includes proof that it was caused by an existing, unconstitutional municipal policy, which . . . can be attributed to a municipal policymaker.").

Given that there was no evidence before the court regarding the content of Muskogee's training, any deliberate indifference exhibited by Muskogee is pure speculation and conjecture. I do not believe there exists any evidence tending to place Plaintiff's case within the "narrow range of circumstances" in which liability may attach without any pattern of past constitutional violations. Ms.

Allen has failed to make a showing sufficient to establish an element on which she would bear the burden of proof at trial. *Celotex*, 477 U.S. at 322, 106 S.Ct. at 2552. Accordingly, I would affirm as to the City of Muskogee.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA

MARILYN ALLEN, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, Plaintiff	)	No. 95-321-S
v.	)	(Filed Jan. 5, 1996)
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA, et al., Defendants	)	

ORDER

Granting Defendants' Motions for Summary Judgment

The plaintiff, Marilyn Allen, brings this civil rights cause of action against the defendants for the alleged wrongful death of her deceased spouse, Terry Allen, caused by the defendants' alleged use of excessive, unreasonable, and deadly force in violation of the Fourth Amendment by the defendant police officers during an armed confrontation with her decedent in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

The defendants Muskogee, Oklahoma ("City") and Eskridge, Muskogee Chief of Police, have moved for summary judgment on the grounds that the defendants City and Eskridge do not have a policy of using unnecessary force which is unconstitutional, that their training and supervision are constitutionally adequate, and there is no custom or practice or pattern of conduct concerning the use of force which is unconstitutional. Further, defendant Eskridge alleges it is uncontested that he personally participated in the incident.

The individual defendants Smith, McDonald, and Farmer, all police officers for the defendant City, have moved for summary judgment based upon qualified immunity, for the reason that their actions were in good faith and conformed to the proper and legal procedures and training of the defendant City's police department, and for the reason that their use of force in this incident was reasonable and necessary under the circumstances and the dictates of the Fourth Amendment.

The court finds that the plaintiff has generally agreed with the defendants' recitation of the undisputed facts (Plaintiff's responses and amended response, "Undisputed Facts", p. 1), and finds there are no genuine issues of material fact which would prevent the determination of these issues, such that summary judgment would be appropriate. Accordingly, pursuant to Rule 56, Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the court makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

Findings of Fact:

1. On February 19, 1994, at their house in Porter, Wagoner County, Oklahoma the plaintiff and her decedent/spouse Terry Allen got into an argument and assault over a card sent to plaintiff's decedent/spouse, allegedly by a former lover. The next day the argument escalated with the plaintiff's decedent/spouse battering the plaintiff and their children and threatening to kill them. The plaintiff's decedent/spouse left his residence in Porter, and later called the plaintiff, telling her that he was going to kill a man that he believed was responsible for his brother's death in an automobile accident several years earlier, and then he was going to kill himself. A neighbor of

the plaintiff reported the February 20, 1994, incident of domestic violence to the Wagoner County Sheriff's Office. (Plaintiff's deposition, Exhibit A, and Wagoner County offense report, Exhibit B, defendant City's motion).

2. Plaintiff's decedent/spouse proceeded to his sister Rhonda Oakley's house in Muskogee, Oklahoma, where he told his sister, "I'm going to die today, either by the pills or a policeman's gun", and that he had "killed three people on Highway 16". This last statement was later determined to be false. Ms. Oakley called 911, reporting that her brother, plaintiff's decedent/spouse, had overdosed on drugs and alcohol, that he was drinking and had chest pains, and that he had guns with him. The Wagoner County Sheriff's office had informed the Muskogee Police department of a description of plaintiff's decedent/spouse's car, that he was armed, that he was at his sister's house in Muskogee, and that there was an outstanding warrant for his arrest for impersonating an officer. (Wagoner County dispatches, Exhibits C and E, and Oakley deposition, Exhibit D, defendant City's brief; Admissions, Pretrial Order).

3. Defendant Smith, a Lieutenant patrol supervisor, was dispatched to the Oakley residence, and defendants Farmer, McDonald, and Crull, all Muskogee Police Officers, responded to that residence as backup. All of the police officers at the scene had knowledge of the above information. The defendant officers observed plaintiff's decedent/spouse sitting in his car with three persons standing around the driver's door. As defendant Smith approached the driver's side of the vehicle, he ordered the three people to step away from the vehicle, which they did. One of them, Lisa Perry, told defendant Smith that plaintiff's decedent/

spouse had a gun. Defendant Smith observed plaintiff's decedent/spouse to be sitting behind the wheel of the vehicle with one foot on the ground through the open door on the driver's side of the vehicle with a gun in his right hand on the console between the seats. Defendant Farmer had proceeded to the passenger side of the vehicle. Several times, defendant Smith told plaintiff's decedent/spouse to drop the gun, but he refused to do so saying, "Go ahead and kill me; I want to die." Defendant Smith tried to reach into the vehicle to disarm plaintiff's decedent/spouse, but he was unsuccessful. Defendant McDonald stood on the driver's side of the vehicle near defendant Smith. Plaintiff's decedent/spouse then pointed the gun at defendant Farmer on the passenger side of the vehicle, and defendant Farmer ducked down and moved to the rear of the vehicle. Plaintiff's decedent/spouse then swung around and pointed his gun at defendants Smith and McDonald. Shots were exchanged between plaintiff's decedent/spouse and defendants Smith and McDonald. It is undetermined which side fired first, as the shots were nearly simultaneous. Plaintiff's decedent was shot and killed. Defendants Smith and McDonald were not shot. Approximately one and one-half minutes passed between the arrival of the defendant police officers and the shooting. (Perry deposition, Exhibit G, defendant City's brief; depositions of Smith, McDonald, and Farmer, Exhibits 7, 12 and 13, defendants' Smith, McDonald, and Farmer brief; Admissions, Pretrial Order).

4. The court finds that the defendants Smith, McDonald, and Farmer knew that the plaintiff's decedent/spouse was under the influence of drugs and alcohol and was armed with a deadly weapon at the time of their confrontation. The court finds those defendants had information that plaintiff's decedent/spouse had

committed battery upon his wife and children, had threatened to kill certain persons, and had stated he had killed three people, although this was untrue but not known by the officers to be untrue at the time of the confrontation. The court finds that the defendant police officers acted reasonably in requiring bystanders to withdraw and in attempting to talk with and disarm the plaintiff's decedent/spouse. The court finds that the plaintiff's decedent/spouse pointed a deadly weapon at the defendant officers, objectively placing them in fear of their lives or the life of another officer, and that the defendant police officers acted reasonably to that threat in defense of themselves and others by shooting and killing the plaintiff's decedent/spouse. Thus, the court finds that the defendant police officers did not use unreasonable or excessive force in this situation, and they did not violate any Fourth Amendment rights of the plaintiff's decedent/spouse.

5. The defendant Eskridge was not personally involved in this incident, nor did he have knowledge of it until after the fact, nor does plaintiff allege such to the contrary. (Plaintiff's amended complaint).

6. Having found no Fourth Amendment constitutional violation by the individual police officer defendants, there can be no liability as to their supervisory authorities, defendants City and Eskridge, and the court finds it unnecessary to make findings concerning their policies and/or training.

Conclusions of Law:

1. This court has jurisdiction and venue in this case. 28 U.S.C. §1331 and 42 U.S.C. §1983, and 28 U.S.C. §1391.

2. Summary Judgment shall be granted where the pleadings, depositions, answers to interrogatories, admissions, and/or affidavits show that there is no genuine issue of material fact and the moving party is entitled to judgment as a matter of law. Rule 56, Federal Rules of Civil Procedure; *Celotex Corp. v. Catrett*, 477 U.S. 317, 322 (1986); *Deepwater Investments, Ltd. v. Jackson Hole Ski Corp.*, 938 F.2d 1105, 1110-11 (10th Cir. 1991).

3. The mere existence of some factual dispute will not defeat a summary judgment motion. The factual dispute must be genuine *and* material to the issue or issues presented. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242, 247-48 (1986).

4. After a movant makes a properly supported motion for summary judgment, the non-moving party has the burden of setting forth *specific* facts showing the existence of a genuine issue of fact for trial. *Vitkus v. Beatrice Co.*, 11 F.3d 1535, 1539 (10th Cir. 1993). An affidavit containing only conclusions of law, unsupported by factual allegations, is insufficient to establish the existence of a triable issue. *Bright v. Moss Ambulance Service, Inc.*, 824 F.2d 819, 824 (10th Cir. 1987). Likewise, conclusory allegations are not sufficient to establish factual issues. *Setliff v. Memorial Hospital of Sheridan County*, 850 F.2d 1384, 1392 (10th Cir. 1988).

5. Summary Judgment is appropriate when a court can conclude that no reasonable juror could find for the non-moving party on the basis of the evidence presented in the motion and response. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, supra at 250-252; *Windon Third Oil and Gas v. FDIC*, 805 F.2d 342, 346 (10th Cir. 1986).

6. All excessive force claims are analyzed under the reasonableness standard of the Fourth Amendment. This reasonableness inquiry is an objective one and heavily fact dependent. The factors employed to

determine reasonableness are the severity of crime at issue, whether the subject poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officer or officers, and whether the subject is resisting arrest. *Wilson v. Meeks*, 52 F.3d 1547, 1552-53 (10th Cir. 1995), citing *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 394-96 (1989).

7. In an excessive use of deadly force claim, qualified immunity does not require a police officer to know or inquire into the state of mind or intentions of an assailant; it requires whether, taking all factors into consideration from an objective viewpoint, the police officer feared for his life (or the life of another) and reasonably reacted to that threat. *Wilson*, 52 F.3d at 1553-54.

8. The "reasonableness" of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. The calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments, in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving, about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation. *Graham*, 490 U.S. at 396-97.

9. Absent a finding of a constitutional violation by the person or persons supervised, a §1983 claim of inadequate training, supervision, and polices [sic] cannot be made out against a supervisory authority. *Webber v. Mefford*, 43 F.3d 1340, 1344-45 (10th Cir. 1994).

10. Supervisors or chiefs of police are not subject to vicarious liability, but are liable only for their own conduct. Thus, a supervisor or police chief may be held liable if he breaches his duty to train subordinates, to supervise or correct misconduct of which he or she has notice, or establish department procedures that will provide protection for constitutional rights.

McClelland v. Facteau, 610 F.2d 693, 695-97 (10th Cir. 1979).

Pursuant to the above Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the defendants' motions for summary judgment are granted.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 5 day of January, 1996.

/s/ Frank H. Seay
FRANK H. SEAY
United States District Judge

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

MARILYN ALLEN, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, deceased, Plaintiff-Appellant, v. MUSKOGEE OKLAHOMA, a municipal corporation; REX ESKRIDGE, DON SMITH, BENTLEY MCDONALD, BRYAN FARMER, and JAMES CRULL, Defendants-Appellees.	)	No. 96-7021

ORDER

Filed September 12, 1997

Before **KELLY, BRISCOE, LUCERO,** Circuit Judges.

The petitions for rehearing filed by Appellee City of Muskogee and Appellees' Don Smith, Bently McDonald, Brian Farmer and James Crull are denied by the panel that rendered the decision.

The suggestion for rehearing en banc was transmitted to all of the judges of the court who are in regular active service as required by Fed. R. App. P. 35. No

member of the panel and no judge in regular active service on the court requested that the court be polled on rehearing en banc so the suggestion for rehearing is also denied.

Entered for the Court
PATRICK FISHER,
Clerk of Court

by: /s/ Illegible
Deputy Clerk

42 U.S.C. § 1983. Civil action for deprivation of rights

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress, except that in any action brought against a judicial officer for an act or omission taken in such officer's judicial capacity, injunctive relief shall not be granted unless a declaratory decree was violated or declaratory relief was unavailable. For the purposes of this section, any Act of Congress applicable exclusively to the District of Columbia shall be considered to be a statute of the District of Columbia.

(As amended Pub.L. 104-317, Title III, § 309(c), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3853.)

§ 1983. Civil action for deprivation of rights

Every person who, under color of any statute, ordinance, regulation, custom, or usage, of any State or Territory or the District of Columbia, subjects, or causes to be subjected, any citizen of the United States or other person within the jurisdiction thereof to the deprivation of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the Constitution and laws, shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress. For the purposes of this section, any Act of

Congress applicable exclusively to the District of Columbia shall be considered to be a statute of the District of Columbia.

(R.S. § 1979; Pub.L. 96-170, § 1, Dec. 29, 1979, 93 Stat. 1284.)

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF OKLAHOMA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF OKLAHOMA)

I, GLEN McENTIRE, being of lawful age, after being first duly sworn upon my oath, depose and state:

1. I am the Firearms Training Coordinator for the State of Oklahoma Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training (a/k/a CLEET). I am not employed by the City of Muskogee. We do provide training to all law enforcement throughout Oklahoma and in particular have trained officers of the Muskogee Police Department.

2. I have reviewed the records relating to the training of four Muskogee Police Department officers, namely Officer Bryan Farmer, Officer Bentley McDonald, Lt. Don Smith and Officer James Crull. The computer printouts listing the courses taken and the number of hours are attached hereto.

3. I have reviewed the reports prepared by the officers relating to the shooting on February 20, 1994, of Terry Lee Allen. I have also viewed the depositions of the four officers taken in the case of *Allen v. City of Muskogee, et al*, case no. CIV-95-321-S, in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma.

4. I have also read the deposition of Dr. George Kirkham given in this same case.

5. In my opinion, the training received by the officers above both by the City of Muskogee and CLEET was appropriate.

6. While I agree with Dr. Kirkham that an officer generally should stay behind cover if possible, I disagree with his opinion that Lt. Smith was careless in the manner in which he approached the car in which Mr. Allen was seated. Civilians were gathered around the driver's door of the car. A 911 call had been made from the residence and Lt. Smith was told that it was a "1056", or an attempted suicide. Under those circumstances, it was appropriate for Lt. Smith to approach as he did. Lt. Smith controlled and contained the suspect and thereby prevented Terry Allen from becoming mobile and further endangering human lives at great personal risk to himself. Furthermore, had Lt. Smith remained behind his car as Dr. Kirkam feels he should have, Mr. Allen could possibly have taken a hostage among those civilians standing nearby.

7. I believe that the officers acted in accordance with proper training procedures as taught by the State of Oklahoma Council on Law Enforcement Education and Training. We do not train officers here in the State of Oklahoma that they can never leave cover, as Dr. Kirkham theorizes Lt. Smith should have acted in this specific instance. Contrary to Dr. Kirkham's testimony, there are many instances where a police officer must leave cover in potentially dangerous circumstances. Lt. Smith's training on this day came to a forefront, and he handled himself in a very professional and well-trained

manner. He exemplified law enforcement training in the State of Oklahoma.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

/s/ Glen McEntire
GLEN McENTIRE

SUBSCRIBED and sworn to before me this 21 day of Nov., 1995.

/s/ Beverly J. Anderson
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

10-4-99

Supreme Court, U.S.
FILED
JAN 27 1998
CLERK

Nos. 97-0970 & 97-0978

In The

Supreme Court of the United States

October Term, 1997

DONALD SMITH, BENTLEY McDONALD, BRIAN FARMER and JAMES CRULL,

Petitioners,

-and-

MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION,

Petitioner,

vs.

MARILYN ALLEN, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, deceased,

Respondent.

On Petitions for Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for The Tenth Circuit

RESPONDENT'S BRIEF IN OPPOSITION

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED FOR REVIEW

1. Is a municipality entitled to summary judgment in a Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action when there are material issues of fact in dispute regarding the municipality's failure to adequately train its police officers?

2. Are police officers entitled to summary judgment in a Title 42 U.S.C. § 1983 excessive force action when there are material issues of fact in dispute regarding the objective reasonableness of the officers' actions during the 90 second encounter?

LIST OF PARTIES

The parties to the proceeding on Petition for Writ of Certiorari are:

Petitioners in docket number 97-0970:

Donald Smith, Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, James Crull, individual police officers (Defendants in the District Court and Appellee in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit)

Petitioner in docket number 97-0978:

Muskogee, Oklahoma, a municipal corporation (Defendant in the District Court and Appellee in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit)

Respondent in docket numbers 97-0970 and 97-0978:

Marilyn Allen, Personal Representative of Terry Allen, deceased (Plaintiff in the District Court and Appellant in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit)

RULE 29.6 STATEMENT

Pursuant to Rule 29.6 of the Rules of this Court, Respondent states she does not have any parent companies or subsidiaries.

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OPINIONS BELOW

The opinion of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma granting summary judgment in favor of the Defendants was not reported. The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit reversing the District Court's grant of summary judgment, is reported at 119 F.3d 837 (10th Cir. 1997). The order of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals denying Defendants' request for rehearing en banc, was not accompanied by an opinion and is not published.

STATEMENT OF JURISDICTION

The Petitioners' statement of jurisdiction is correct.

STATUTORY AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS INVOLVED

Petitioners have correctly set forth the provisions of 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Other statutory and constitutional provisions involved are as follows:

United States Code, Title 42:

§ 1988(a). Proceedings in vindication of civil rights

(a) Applicability of statutory and common law

The jurisdiction in civil and criminal matters conferred on the district courts by the provisions of titles, 13, 24, and 70 of the Revised Statutes for the protection of all persons in the United States in their civil rights, and for their vindication, shall be

exercised and enforced in conformity with the laws of the United States, so far as such laws are suitable to carry the same into effect; but in all cases where they are not adapted to the object, or are deficient in the provisions necessary to furnish suitable remedies and punish offenses against law, the common law, as modified and changed by the constitution and statutes of the State wherein the court having jurisdiction of such civil or criminal cause is held, so far as the same is not inconsistent with the Constitution and laws of the United States, shall be extended to and govern the said courts in the trial and disposition of the cause, and, if it is of a criminal nature, in the infliction of punishment on the party found guilty.

Constitution of the United States

Amendment IV — Searches and Seizures

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V — Grand jury indictment for capital crimes; Double jeopardy; Self-incrimination; Due process of law; Just compensation for property

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases

arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VIII — Excessive bail, Fines, Punishments

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.

Amendment XIV, Section 1

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

A. Factual History

On February 20, 1994, at approximately 2:30 p.m., Mr. Allen was sitting in the driver's seat of his car in the driveway

of the home of Rhonda Oakley, Mr. Allen's sister, in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The driver's side door was open, and Mr. Allen was talking to his sisters, Rhonda Oakley and Mary Butler, his brother-in-law, Jim Butler and his niece, Lisa Perry. Mr. Allen had been taking prescription pain medication and drinking beer. (Aplt. App. at 770-771).[1] He was very depressed, he was crying and possibly suicidal. (Aplt. App. at 776-777). He had a gun laying in the passenger seat of the car. (Aplt. App. at 776). Mr. Allen's family members had their arms around him, were comforting him, and trying to get him to come into Rhonda Oakley's home. (Aplt. App. at 768).

At one point, Mr. Allen grabbed his chest as if in pain, and appeared to pass out. Rhonda Oakley went into the house to call 911 to get an ambulance. (Aplt. App. at 773). Mary Butler, Jim Butler and Lisa Perry stayed with Mr. Allen. Within minutes of Rhonda Oakley going into the house to call an ambulance, a black car "swerves up" behind Mr. Allen's vehicle. (Aplt. App. at 778). A man jumps out of the car, and as he's coming around the back end of the car he pulls out a gun. (Aplt. App. at 778). The man starts screaming "Get out of the way. Get out of the way, now"! (Aplt. App. at 779-780). The man is running fast up to Mr. Allen's car. (Aplt. App. at 780). He never stops to talk to any of the family members to find out about the situation.

In response to the man's screaming, and the fact that he had a gun pointed at them, Mary Butler grabs her daughter, Lisa Perry, and runs back behind the car. (Aplt. App. at 780). Jim Butler does not move quite as fast, he is kneeling beside Mr. Allen with his hands on Mr. Allen's hands, so the man screams again "Get out of the way. Get out of the way, now"! (Aplt. App. at 780-781). Jim Butler then gets up and gets out of the way. (Aplt. App. at 782).

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1. Citations are to documents contained in Appellant's Appendix filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

The man then says "Put down the gun. Put down the damn gun. Put down the goddamn gun"! (Aplt. App. at 783). Within a second after the man says "Put down the goddamn gun" shots are fired and Mr. Allen is dead. (Aplt. App. at 784). Prior to shots being fired, Jim Butler heard Mr. Allen say "Just go ahead and shoot me. Just go ahead and shoot me. I want to die". (Aplt. App. at 788).

Mr. Allen had been at Rhonda Oakley's house for approximately thirty (30) minutes prior to his death. (Aplt. App. at 774). Mrs. Oakley had been sitting inside the car in the passenger seat talking to Mr. Allen for approximately twenty (20) minutes prior to the other family members' arrival. (Aplt. App. at 769, 772).

The man who screamed at the family and at Mr. Allen was in plain clothes, and did not identify himself as a police officer. The car he was driving was just a black car with no lights or any identifying marks. (Aplt. App. at 785, 789). It was later determined that the man was Lieutenant Don Smith with the Muskogee Police Department. Approximately 90 seconds elapsed from the time Lieutenant Smith arrived until Mr. Allen was killed. (Aplt. App. at 811).

On the day Mr. Allen was killed, the Muskogee Police Department held a squad meeting at one-thirty in the afternoon. During the squad meeting, which was conducted by Smith, the dispatchers brought in a teletype. According to Smith, the teletype named Mr. Allen, gave his description, and said he was wanted from another county (Wagoner County) on a § 1983 misdemeanor warrant of impersonating an officer. The teletype also said that Mr. Allen was armed and should be approached with caution, that he had threatened his relatives, and that some relatives lived in Muskogee, so he could possibly be coming to the Muskogee area. (Aplt. App. at 794).

Smith was not sure if the misdemeanor warrant was a valid warrant because it said 1983. He thought it was a typographical error, which he testified happens quite frequently, and should have read 1993. A 1983 misdemeanor warrant would have been too old for an arrest to be made. (Aplt. App. at 812-813). The misdemeanor warrant was, in fact, for a 1983 misdemeanor offense that had been dismissed years prior to this incident. (Aplt. App. at 791-792).

Neither Smith, nor any of the other police officers went to look for Mr. Allen after the squad meeting. In fact, Smith did some paperwork around the office and then, around two-thirty in the afternoon, he decided to go wash his car. Smith left the police station and was en route to the car wash when his dispatcher called and wanted him to call him back. (Aplt. App. at 795-796). Smith went on to the car wash and called the dispatcher from a pay phone. Smith cannot remember if he washed his car first or used the pay phone first.

When he called the dispatcher, Smith was advised that the information from Wagoner County was that Mr. Allen was in town and was possibly at his sister's house at 4421 West Broadway. (Aplt. App. at 796). Smith advised the dispatcher that he would go check it out. (Aplt. App. at 797). Smith drove to Mr. Allen's sister's house and saw Mr. Allen's car. He then drove on for about a block and-a-half, called the dispatcher, told him he had located the car, and asked that units be sent that way, and that the information on the warrant be brought to him. (Aplt. App. at 798).

While Smith was waiting, the dispatcher advised him that EMS (Emergency Medical Systems) was en route, that Mr. Allen had attempted suicide possibly with drugs and alcohol. (Aplt. App. at 799). Smith immediately went to Mr. Allen's sister's house, parked behind Mr. Allen's vehicle, ordered the family

members to get out of the way, and went up to Mr. Allen who was sitting in the vehicle with the driver's door open, one leg in, one leg out. (Aplt. App. at 800-802).

Smith saw that there was a revolver in the car laying across the console, pointed at the dash. (Aplt. App. at 802). Smith drew his weapon and told Mr. Allen to give him the gun. (Aplt. App. at 802). Mr. Allen told Smith "shoot me, just go ahead and shoot me, I don't want to live". (Aplt. App. at 802). Smith observed that Mr. Allen was "listless", that he (Mr. Allen) "wasn't focusing on everything", and that he "was not presenting a threat". (Aplt. App. at 802-803).

During the brief time that Smith was confronting Mr. Allen, the other officers arrived. Officer McDonald came up to Smith's right shoulder, Officer Farmer moved to the right-rear corner of Mr. Allen's vehicle, Officer Crull moved to the back of the vehicle. (Aplt. App. at 803). Smith then went into the car and reached over Mr. Allen, into the passenger seat of the car trying to grab Mr. Allen's Gun. Officer McDonald grabbed Mr. Allen's left shoulder and was holding him while Smith tried to grab the gun. Mr. Allen just moved the gun a little farther away. Smith tried again to go over the top of Mr. Allen and get the gun. Mr. Allen just moved the gun a little farther away. During Smith's attempts to go over Mr. Allen and get to the passenger seat to get the gun, Mr. Allen was still listless, he didn't try to grab Smith, he didn't make any overt moves, he just moved the gun away. (Aplt. App. at 804-805; 832-833).

Officer Farmer then moved to the front passenger side door and tried to open it. As a result of the noise from Officer Farmer trying to open the passenger door, which was locked, Mr. Allen looked up at Officer Farmer, then looked back at Smith, and moved his arm and gun around in Smith's direction. Smith then shot Mr. Allen. (Aplt. App. at 805). Smith was two to

three feet from Mr. Allen when he (Smith) fired his first round. Mr. Allen's weapon discharged after he was shot by Smith. Whether Mr. Allen intended to discharge his weapon is unknown. Smith told Kelly Beach, the officer that investigated the incident, that Mr. Allen did not fire his weapon until after Smith had shot his first round. (Aplt. App. at 834). Smith and Officer McDonald started firing and continued firing until Mr. Allen quit moving. (Aplt. App. at 806-807). Smith fired his gun eight times. (Aplt. App. at 836). Officer McDonald fired his weapon four times. (Aplt. App. at 835). Mr. Allen was struck by four bullets. (Aplt. App. at 836).

B. Misstatements of Fact by Petitioner, Muskogee, Oklahoma

As noted by the Tenth Circuit in its opinion, there is no evidence in the record that the police officers had any knowledge of Petitioner's (City's) facts numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 11, either prior to or at the time of the incident in question.[2]

The City's facts numbered 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 all have to do with police training. The City overstates the training with respect to dealing with mentally disturbed

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2. The Tenth Circuit stated:

> In granting summary judgment, the district court went beyond the agreed-upon facts and made its own findings. The court found, for example, that the officers knew that Mr. Allen had claimed to have killed three people before arriving at his sister's home. Whether the officers knew does not alter our review, but Plaintiff is correct in pointing out that the court's finding is not supported by the record.

The Tenth Circuit's Opinion in this case is located at Appendix 1 of the City's Petition.

people that is actually received by the police officers. In the district court as well as in the Tenth Circuit, the City focused almost exclusively on deadly force training as opposed to training on how to deal with the mentally/emotionally disturbed.

Contrary to the City's fact numbered 25, the Respondent (Mrs. Allen) does have knowledge of the officer's training. Prior to the shooting death of Mr. Allen, in February 1994, the police officers involved had received their basic training required to be a police officer by the State of Oklahoma, and a one hour course on mental health law in November 1993. The City failed to produce any evidence of the training provided by the State, if any, with respect to dealing with the mentally or emotionally disturbed.

The one hour course provided by the City consisted of a review of any new mental health laws, changes in procedures by Green Country Mental Health, which is the mental health group in town, and a training film. (Aplt. App. at 808-809).

The City's fact numbered 27 is hotly disputed by Mrs. Allen's expert witness, Dr. George Kirkham. The City's fact numbered 28 is taken out of context. Dr. Kirkham testified as follows:

> A. Well, I am forced to conclude from this record that it is the testimony of Muskogee Police Department, at least in the person of Lieutenant Brook, I have not seen any other command officers that — that, "Though these materials are provided, and though there are handouts on handling abnormal people in a way that I'm familiar with, and I represent to you as proper, that we don't do it this way. We train them to do it the way they did it." Which means — inevitably, it means to not use

> cover at their own discretion in a situation like this, to let innocent people remain out in the open, to engage in provocative, or seemingly provocative and precipitous conduct with mentally ill people who have guns.
>
> That is the way they really do it and that's improper.

(Aplt. App. at 823-824).

Dr. Kirkham further testified that the individual officers could not have possibly been properly trained and still have handled the situation as they did.

> Q. Yeah. We knew he had been drinking and maybe taking drugs, but no one knew he was going to point a gun at those officers.
>
> A. With all due respect, this is a fundamental point in this case. I don't think that any properly trained police officer, knowing what was known, could not imminently foresee the risk of a firearms situation resulting.
>
> We know that you've got someone that is mentally ill. Not only are they mentally ill, they have violently attacked people, they have a firearm, they've been taking drugs and alcohol. Those are every conceivable kind of warning signs that I could even imagine, and you're going to approach and confront that person in the open and not foresee the likelihood of a violent encounter? Not only that, but then they tell you, on top of all that, that they want you to kill them. They want to die. And you continue to provoke them.

> This is the most — I'll say this on the record, this is the most egregious example of the mishandling of a mentally ill person by police officers that I believe I've ever seen. I will stand on my record of 20 years of practice.

(Aplt. App. at 825-826).

The City's fact numbered 31 is disputed by Mrs. Allen as demonstrated by the testimony of Dr. Kirkham quoted above.

With respect to the statutes found at footnote 9 at pages 20 and 21 of the City's Petition, there is *no* evidence that the police officers received the training described in the rule promulgated by CLEET which went into effect on September 1, 1992 (70 O.S. § 3311.5). Lieutenant Smith never went through CLEET. All of the other officers involved had completed their CLEET training prior to September 1, 1992, the effective date of § 3311.5.

C. Misstatements of Fact by Petitioners, Donald Smith, Bentley McDonald, Brian Farmer, and James Crull

The Tenth Circuit did not hold that the reasonableness of the officers' use of force should be judged upon the demeanor of one of the officers as he approached the car and cleared the area of bystanders. The Tenth Circuit held that it would consider an officer's conduct prior to the suspect's threat of force if the conduct is "immediately connected" to the suspect's threat of force.

The Tenth Circuit's holding does not "eviscerate[]" the test of objective reasonableness crafted by this Court. The Tenth Circuit's holding, pursuant to the facts of this case, does not conflict with the holdings of other courts of appeals.

As noted at paragraph 1 of section B above, and at footnote 2 of this Brief, the police officers had no knowledge of most of the matters set forth at the second and third paragraphs on page 3 and continued onto page 4 of the Officers' Petition.

The remainder of the Officers' version of the facts are disputed as set forth in Respondents' Factual History under section 1(A) above.

With respect to footnote 1 of the Officers' Petition, there is no evidence that Mr. Allen threatened the Officers at all. There is also no evidence that Mr. Allen "fired upon" the Officers until after Mr. Allen had been shot by Lieutenant Smith.

The Tenth Circuit did not "convert[ ] the test of objective reasonableness . . . into a subjective examination . . .".

D. Procedural History

Mrs. Allen filed her Complaint in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988, alleging a violation by the Petitioners of Mr. Allen's 4th, 5th, 8th and 14th Amendment rights, and failure of the City and the Chief of Police, Rex Eskridge, to properly train its police officers.

The City and Chief of Police, as well as the individual police officers, filed Motions for Summary Judgment. The district court entered its Order granting Summary Judgment in favor of all Defendants. The district court found that there were no genuine issues of material fact in dispute, that the individual officers committed no constitutional violation, and that the City was entitled to summary judgment because municipal liability requires a constitutional violation by the officers.

Mrs. Allen appealed the district court's decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. The Tenth Circuit found that there were material issues of fact in dispute, and concluded that Mrs. Allen presented sufficient evidence as to the Officers and the City to withstand summary judgment.

REASONS FOR DENYING THE CITY'S PETITION

Mrs. Allen's appeal to the Tenth Circuit was from a grant of summary judgment. The Tenth Circuit simply found that there were material issues of fact in dispute, and therefore, summary judgment was not proper.[3] There has been no trial in this case. Mrs. Allen has not had an opportunity to present her case to a jury for a determination of the hotly contested factual issues herein involved. The Tenth Circuit was correct in finding that there were material issues of fact in dispute making the district court's grant of summary judgment improper. The Tenth Circuit also correctly interpreted *City of Canton v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378 (1989).

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3. With respect to the City, the Tenth Circuit found that the *basis* upon which the district court granted summary judgment was faulty. In this regard, the Tenth Circuit stated:

> After the district court determined the individual officers committed no constitutional violation, the court granted summary judgement to the City, reasoning that municipal liability requires a constitutional violation by the officers. . . . the court erred in entering summary judgment on that ground because we have concluded plaintiff presented sufficient evidence that the officers committed a constitutional violation to withstand a summary judgment motion.

I.

THE TENTH CIRCUIT'S INTERPRETATION OF *CANTON* WAS CORRECT

The City argues that "*Canton* stands for the proposition that liability will attach only when a city *fails to provide* training to its officers." (City's Petition p. 13). The City concludes that the Tenth Circuit misinterpreted *Canton* in reversing the district court's grant of summary judgment because there was evidence that the City had provided training to its officers on dealing with mentally disturbed persons. The City refuses to recognize that "[i]n resolving the issue of a city's liability, the focus must be on *adequacy* of the training program in relation to the tasks the particular officers must perform." *Id.* at 390. The City also refuses to recognize that a question of fact exists as to whether a one hour course on mental health law is sufficient training to relieve the City of liability. Likewise, a question of fact exists as to whether training officers to leave cover, rush up to an armed suicidal person and try to take away his gun, constitutes adequate training.[4] This Court in *Canton* stated as follows:

> The issue in a case like this one, however, is whether that training program is *adequate*; and if it is not, the question becomes whether such *inadequate training* can justifiably be said to represent "city policy." It may seem contrary to common sense to assert that a municipality will actually have a policy of not taking reasonable steps to train its employees. But it may happen that in light of the duties assigned to specific officers or employees the need for *more*

4. The police officers testified in deposition that they acted in conformity with their training. Plaintiff's expert, Dr. Kirkham testified that if the police officers acted in conformity with their training, then the training was inadequate.

> *or different training* is so obvious, and the *inadequacy* so likely to result in the violation of constitutional rights, that the policymakers of the city can reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need. In that event, the failure to provide *proper* training may fairly be said to represent a policy for which the city is responsible, and for which the city may be held liable if it actually causes injury. (Emphasis added).

489 U.S. at 390, 109 S. Ct. at 1205.

The Tenth Circuit did not misinterpret *Canton* or create any new basis for municipal liability. The Tenth Circuit's decision stands for the proposition that ***in this case***, based upon the evidence presented at the summary judgment stage, a factual dispute exists as to the training received by the police officers in dealing with mentally disturbed persons.

The City would have *Canton* stand for the proposition that municipal liability will only attach when a city admits that it ***completely*** failed to train its officers. Respondent submits that improper training of police officers poses as much, if not more of a danger to citizens, than no training at all. In *Commissioners of Bryan County v. Brown*, 117 S. Ct. 1382 (1997), this Court held:

> We concluded in *Canton* that an "inadequate training" claim could be the basis for § 1983 liability in "limited circumstances." (citations omitted) We spoke, however, of a deficient training "program," necessarily intended to apply over time to multiple employees. Existence of a "program" makes proof of fault and causation at least possible in an inadequate training case.

This Court has thus made clear that a *complete* failure to train is not necessarily a prerequisite for § 1983 municipal liability. In this case there is evidence that there was a training "program" intended to apply over time to multiple employees. There is also evidence that the training program is "inadequate" and "deficient". The Tenth Circuit correctly applied *Canton*, as well as *Brown* in reversing the district court's grant of summary judgment.

II.

THE FIRST SHOT IS NOT FREE

The City contends that proof of other incidents similar to the one in dispute is required before the City can be held liable. In *City of Oklahoma City v. Tuttle*, 471 U.S. 808, 105 S. Ct. 2427 (1985) (plurality opinion), Justice Brennan, in his concurring opinion stated:

> A rule that the city should be entitled to it's first constitutional violation without incurring liability — even where the first incident was the taking of the life of an innocent citizen — would be a legal anomaly, unsupported by the legislative history or policies underlying Sec. 1983. A Sec. 1983 cause of action is as available for the first victim . . . as it is for the second and subsequent victims; by exposing a municipal defendant to liability on the occurrence of the first incident, it is hoped that future incidents will not occur.

The Court reiterated this position in *Brown, supra*, stating as follows:

> In *Canton*, we did not foreclose the possibility that evidence of a single violation of federal rights,

> accompanied by a showing that a municipality has failed to train its employees to handle recurring situations presenting an obvious potential for such a violation, could trigger municipal liability. 489 U.S., at 390, and n. 10 ("[I]t may happen that in light of the duties assigned to specific officers or employees the need for **more** or **different** training is so obvious . . . that the policymakers of the city can reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need").

In this case, the police officers testified that dealing with mentally or emotionally disturbed people is something they do "all the time." There was evidence that the use of force arose under circumstances that constituted a usual and recurring situation with which police officers must deal. The Tenth Circuit was correct in finding that:

> [b]y providing direct evidence of inadequate training, . . . plaintiff provided sufficient evidence beyond the occurrence of the single incident to withstand summary judgment.

III.

THERE IS NO SPLIT AMONG THE CIRCUITS

This Court has held that in determining municipal liability, "the focus must be on the adequacy of the training program in relation to the tasks the particular officers must perform." *Canton*, 109 S. Ct. at 1205-06. *Mateyko v. Felix*, 924 F.2d 824 (9th Cir. 1991), is the only case cited by Petitioner, from circuits other than the Tenth Circuit, that involves excessive force. *Mateyko* involved training in the use of Tazer guns. The City produced evidence that its officers received three to four hours

of training specifically in the use of Tazer guns. The Ninth Circuit found, under the evidence presented in that case, that:

> no reasonable jury could conclude these alleged inadequacies in training, *without more*, established deliberate indifference to the rights of person with whom the police came in contact.

Id. at 826. (Emphasis added).

In this case, unlike in *Mateyko*, the Tenth Circuit found that:

> [t]here was evidence presented to the district court that the officers received inadequate training on how to deal with mentally ill or emotionally upset persons who are armed with firearms.[5]

Allen at 842. The Tenth Circuit stated:

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5. The Tenth Circuit noted that Plaintiff's expert witness testified in deposition that

> [i]f the State of Oklahoma through CLEET trains their officers to not be mindful of cover, to be aggressive with mentally ill people, do all these things that are totally off the board, then the State is wrong and out of synch with the rest of the country in the police profession.

Allen at 842. The testimony is undisputed that the officers acted in accordance with their training.

In addition, there is no evidence that the police officers involved in this incident received the training described in paragraph 3 of Petitioner's footnote 9 with respect to mental health treatment. In fact, Officer Smith did not attend CLEET.

> When viewed in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, the record contains evidence that the officers were trained to act recklessly in a manner that created a high risk of death. The evidence is sufficient to support an inference that the need for different training was so obvious and the inadequacy so likely to result in violation of constitutional rights that the policymakers of the City could reasonably be said to have been deliberately indifferent to the need.

Allen at 843.

Unlike the cases selectively cited by the Petitioner, the evidence of inadequate training presented by the Plaintiff in this case was substantial. Inadequate training cases are fact specific. The difference in the facts and evidence presented in the cases cited by the Petitioner, and the facts and evidence presented in this case, determined the different outcomes; not a difference in interpretation of the law. There is no split among the circuits requiring review by this Court.

IV.

THE TENTH CIRCUIT DID NOT "SECOND-GUESS" THE STATE TRAINING PROGRAM

The Petitioner filed for summary judgment requesting the federal court to decide whether its training program was adequate, as opposed to allowing a jury, made up of citizens of the eastern district of the State of Oklahoma, to decide this issue. Ultimately, the City did not receive the answer it was looking for from the federal court system. Now the City complains that the federal court has no business deciding this issue at all, unless it decides the issue in favor of the City.

The Respondent agrees, that given the disputed issues of fact in this case, a court should not be permitted to decide whether these police officers were adequately trained. As decided by the Tenth Circuit, there are material issues of fact in dispute regarding the training actually received by the officers. Under our system of jurisprudence, a jury, made up of citizens of the state and district where the cause of action arose, are to decide these disputed factual issues. The Tenth Circuit recognized that:

> Summary judgment is appropriate only if "there is no genuine issue as to any material fact and . . . the moving party is entitled to a judgment as a matter of law." Fed.R.Civ.P. 56(c). A disputed fact is "material if it might affect the outcome of the suit under the governing law, and the dispute is "genuine" if the evidence is such that a reasonable jury could return a verdict for the nonmoving party. *Anderson v. Liberty Lobby, Inc.*, 477 U.S. 242, 248, 106 S. Ct. 2505, 2509, 91 L. Ed.2d 202 (1986). We construe the factual record and reasonable inferences therefrom in the light most favorable to the nonmovant. *Gullickson v. Southwest Airlines Pilots' Assoc.*, 87 F.3d 1176, 1183 (10th Cir. 1996).

The Tenth Circuit did not "second guess" anyone. Likewise, the Tenth Circuit did not "override" the State of Oklahoma. The "federalism" cases cited by the Petitioner have no application here. The Tenth Circuit did not promulgate any rules, or issue any directives with respect to the City or State law enforcement training programs. The Tenth Circuit found that the City had failed to present sufficient evidence of the training actually received by the officers in order to be entitled to summary judgment.

The police officers and witnesses for the City testified that the officers acted in conformity with their training. Dr. Kirkham, Plaintiff's expert witness, testified that if the officers are trained to aggressively rush up on mentally disturbed, suicidal people and attempt to disarm them in the manner that they did in this case, then the training is "wrong and out of synch with the rest of the country in the police profession." The City produced no evidence to rebut Dr. Kirkham's testimony, other than to say the police officers acted in accordance with their training. The City produced no evidence of the training actually received.

The State of Oklahoma has directed CLEET to set ***minimum*** training requirements for a person to become a police officer. The City would have this Court hold that as long as the City sends its officers to CLEET, regardless of what the officers are trained to do or not to do, and regardless of whether the City trains its officers to follow or not follow the CLEET training, the City cannot be liable. Such a holding would completely deprive citizens of the right to hold cities accountable for constitutional violations due to improper training, making § 1983, as well as this Court's decision in *Monell v. New York City Dept. of Social Services*, 436 U.S. 658 (1978), and its progeny, a nullity.

The Tenth Circuit found that the Plaintiff had produced sufficient evidence supporting each of the four (4) requirements set forth in *Canton*. The Tenth Circuit did not hold the City liable. The Tenth Circuit said that, under the evidence presented, and given the disputed facts in this case, a jury, not a court, should decide whether the City is liable. There is no federalism issue involved in this case.

REASONS FOR DENYING THE OFFICERS' PETITION

I.

THE TENTH CIRCUIT CORRECTLY APPLIED THE OBJECTIVE REASONABLENESS STANDARD

In excessive force cases, the Court pays "careful attention to the facts and circumstances of [the] particular case," *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386, 109 S. Ct. 1865, 104 L. Ed. 2d 443 (1989), and asks whether the "totality of the circumstances" justified the use of force. *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1, 105 S. Ct. 1694, 85 L. Ed. 2d 1 (1985). The reasonableness of the Officers' actions depends both on whether the officers were in danger at the precise moment that they used force, and on whether the Officers' own reckless or deliberate conduct immediately connected with the seizure unreasonably created the need to use such force. To hold otherwise would make the "totality of the circumstances" inquiry set forth by this Court in *Tennessee v. Garner* meaningless.

The district court in granting summary judgment in this case in favor of the Officers found that the Officers acted objectively reasonable under the circumstances. As noted by the Tenth Circuit, however, the district court's findings of what the circumstances were was erroneous.[6]

FIRST — The district court's finding of fact #1 has to do with an incident that happened at the Plaintiff's home the day before. There was no evidence in this case that the Officers had *any* knowledge of this incident.

SECOND — The district court's finding of fact #2, was that Mr. Allen told his sister "I'm going to die today, either by

6. The district court's Order, including its Findings of Fact, is located at Appendix B of the Officers' Petition for Writ of Certiorari.

the pills or a policeman's gun", and that he had "killed three people on highway 16" — There is *no* evidence in this case that the Officers had *any* knowledge of this statement.

THIRD — The district court's finding of fact #4 was:

> the court finds those Defendants had information that Plaintiff's Decedent/Spouse had committed battery upon his wife and children, had threatened to kill certain persons, and had stated he had killed three people . . .

There is *no* evidence in this case that the Officers had *any* knowledge of any of these statements.

The Officers are correct that 20/20 hindsight is not to be used in determining whether police officers acted reasonably. The argument usually made by police officers, is that they had no knowledge of the information argued in support of a Plaintiff's case. Here, however, the police officers, as well as the district court, used information that was discovered *after the fact* to justify the officers' use of excessive force.

In examining whether the Officers' actions were objectively reasonable, it is necessary to look at what the Officers actually knew. In this case, the Officers knew:

1. That there was a 1983 misdemeanor warrant from another county for Mr. Allen impersonating a police officer;

2. That a 1983 misdemeanor warrant was too old for an arrest to be made;

3. That Mr. Allen had threatened family members earlier in the day;

4. That he was armed and should be approached with caution.

5. That he may be attempting suicide with pills and alcohol (*not* with a gun); and

6. That he was having chest pains.

This is *all* the Officers knew when they arrived at the scene.

The next inquiry that must be made is: What did the Officers observe upon arriving at the scene?

1. A person fitting Mr. Allen's description sitting in a car with one leg in and one leg out; and

2. Two women and a man surrounding Mr. Allen — the man was kneeling on the ground in front of Mr. Allen with his hands on Mr. Allen's hands which were resting in Mr. Allen's lap; one of the women had her hand on Mr. Allen's shoulder.

Under *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386 (1989) the factors employed to determine reasonableness are:

1. The severity of the crime at issue;

2. Whether the subject poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers, and

3. Whether the subject is resisting arrest.

None of these factors are present in this case. There was no valid crime at issue. There was no threat to the officers when they arrived at the scene. There was no valid arrest to be made.

The facts of this case do not support the Officers' argument that the situation was "rapidly evolving", or that there were any "instantaneous decisions" to be made.

It is important to remember that the following actions by the Officers took place within 90 seconds of Lieutenant Smith arriving at the scene:

1. Lieutenant Smith, in plain clothes, jumps out of his unmarked car, draws his gun, and screams "Get out of the way. Get out of the way now!"

2. Lieutenant Smith never stops to talk to any of the people surrounding Mr. Allen, nor does he ever identify himself as a police officer.

3. Lieutenant Smith runs up to Mr. Allen's car and yells at him to "put down the goddamn gun!"

4. Mr. Allen says something to the effect of "Just go ahead and shoot me, I don't want to live".

5. By this time the other Officer's have arrived, Officer McDonald holds onto Mr. Allen's shoulder while Officer Smith reaches into the car, across Mr. Allen, and tries to grab the gun laying in the passenger seat.

6. Mr. Allen was "listless" and "not presenting a threat", according to Lieutenant Smith.

7. Mr. Allen just moved the gun a little farther away.

8. Lieutenant Smith then tries again to go over the top of Mr. Allen and grab the gun.

9. Mr. Allen again just moved the gun a little farther away.

10. Then, Officer Farmer tries to get into the passenger side door to get the gun.

11. Mr. Allen picks the gun up off of the seat and moves it around to Lieutenant Smith's side.

12. Lieutenant Smith fires, then Mr. Allen's gun discharges.

13. Lieutenant Smith fired his gun 8 times, Officer McDonald fired 4 times. Mr. Allen was struck by 4 bullets and was killed.

Although Mr. Allen had a gun in his car, he hadn't shot anyone. He hadn't threatened anyone. The gun wasn't even in Mr. Allen's hand at the time the Officers began trying to take it away. Given the facts that the Officers *actually* had knowledge of at the time, and the circumstances that the Officers observed at the scene, in other words, given the "totality of the circumstances" during the 90 seconds involved, were the Officers' actions objectively reasonable? Plaintiff's expert, Dr. Kirkham testified as follows:

> . . . That's why the principles are to contain, control, communicate from a covered position. By the time — and most of these situations eventuate without anybody being killed or injures (sic). It's when you start to look — and the record seems so clear to me in this case. The things Terry Allen does are directly in response to very provocative activities by the

> officers. Trying to grab the gun, trying to get in the door, standing out in the open. Now we're in the posture of saying it's a split second shooting. Of course it is, but what the hell were they doing in this position to begin with?

(Aplt. App. at 821).

The Tenth Circuit was correct in holding that the Officers failed to carry their initial burden of demonstrating the absence of a genuine issue of material fact with regard to the objective reasonableness of the Officers' actions. The objective reasonableness standard was correctly applied by the Tenth Circuit in this case. The Officers' Petition should be denied.

II.

THERE IS NO SPLIT AMONG THE CIRCUITS

The Tenth Circuit, citing *Romero v. Board of County Comm'rs*, 60 F.3d 702, 705 n.5 (10th Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, __ U.S. __, 116 S. Ct. 776, 133 L. Ed. 2d 728 (1996); *Bella v. Chamberlain*, 24 F.3d 1251, 1256 n.7 (10th Cir. 1994), *cert. denied*, 513 U.S. 1109, 115 S. Ct. 898, 130 L. Ed. 2d 783 (1995); and *Tennessee v. Garner, supra*, held that:

> We will thus consider an officers' conduct prior to the suspect's threat of force if the conduct is "*immediately connected*" to the suspect's threat of force. (Emphasis added).
>
> * * *
>
> The entire incident, from the time Lt. Smith arrived to the time of the shooting, took only ninety seconds.

> Clearly, the officers' preceding actions were so "*immediately connected*" to Mr. Allen's threat of force that they should be included in the reasonableness inquiry. (Emphasis added).

Contrary to the Officers' argument, the Fourth, Seventh and Second Circuits are in accord. As quoted by the Officers in their Petition, the Fourth Circuit in *Greenridge v. Ruffin*, 927 F.2d 789 (4th Cir. 1991), relying on the Seventh Circuit cases of *Ford v. Childers*, 855 F.2d 1271 (7th Cir. 1988) and *Sherrod v. Berry*, 856 F.2d 802 (7th Cir. 1988), held that the officer's liability be determined upon an examination and weighing of the information the officers possessed "*immediately prior* to *and* at the very moment they fired the fatal shot[s]." The Second Circuit, in *Salim v. Proulx*, 93 F.3d 86 (2d Cir. 1996), as quoted in the Officers' Petition, also held the officer's knowledge of circumstances "*immediately prior* to *and* at the moment that he made the split-second decision to employ deadly force" is relevant.

Respondent submits that there is not much, if any, difference between the words "immediately prior" and "immediately connected". If anything "immediately connected" denotes a stronger connotation in that it requires that the Officers' actions be connected to the seizure itself. Here, the entire event took 90 seconds. The Officers' actions in dispute took place "immediately prior" to and were "immediately connected" with the seizure itself. The Tenth Circuit's decision in this case is in accordance with the majority of the other circuits, as well as this Court's decision in *Tennessee v. Garner*. The Officer's Petition should be denied.

CONCLUSION

The evidence presented by the City of the training it gave its officers with respect to dealing with the mentally and emotionally disturbed, consisted almost exclusively of its blanket statement that the officers involved acted in accordance with their training. The City's statement is self-serving and is not sufficient to entitle it to summary judgment on Plaintiff's inadequate training claim.

The Plaintiff, on the other hand, presented direct and substantial evidence of inadequate training beyond the occurrence of this single incident. Dealing with mentally or emotionally disturbed individuals is something police officers are required to do on a frequent and recurring basis. As Dr. Kirkham testified:

> [I]f police trainers in the State of Oklahoma are using this case as an example of how you properly handle a mentally ill individual, then police officers will assuredly die, and other mentally ill people and probably innocent people will die.

The facts and evidence presented in this case are sufficient for a jury to find that the City's failure to properly train its officers reflected deliberate indifference to the obvious consequence of the City's choice; the death of Terry Allen.

For the reasons set forth above, the City's Petition for a Writ of Certiorari should be denied.

The Officers failed to carry their burden of demonstrating the absence of a genuine issue of material fact in this case. The district court's findings of fact were not supported by the record and were erroneous. The Tenth Circuit followed the

majority of the Circuits, as well as decisions of this Court, in holding that the actions of the Officers "immediately connected" to the seizure are relevant to the objective reasonableness inquiry in this case.

For the reasons set forth above, the Officers' Petition for a Writ of Certiorari should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

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